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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

A Question of Listening

Nancean Resonance and Listening in the Work of Charlie Chaplin

Giunta, Carolyn Sara

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**A Question of Listening: Nancean Resonance and
Listening in the Work of Charlie Chaplin**

Carolyn Sara Giunta

PhD Thesis

University of Dundee

March 2013

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Declaration

I declare that I am the sole author of this thesis and it has not been accepted previously for a higher degree. I have consulted all of the references cited.

Signed

Abstract

In this thesis, I use a close reading of the silent films of Charlie Chaplin to examine a question of listening posed by Jean-Luc Nancy, “Is listening something of which philosophy is capable” (Nancy 2007:1)? Drawing on the work of Nancy, Jacques Derrida and Gayatri Spivak, I consider a claim that philosophy has failed to address the topic of listening because a logocentric tradition claims speech as primary. In response to Derrida’s deconstruction of logocentrism, Nancy complicates the problem of listening by distinguishing between *l’écoute* and *l’entente*. *L’écoute* is an attending to and answering the demand of the other and *l’entente* is an understanding directed inward toward a subject. Nancy could deconstruct an undervalued position of *l’écoute*, making listening essential to speech. I argue, Nancy rather asks what kind of listening philosophy is capable of.

To examine this question, I focus on the peculiarly dialogical figure derived from Chaplin that communicates meaning without using speech. This discussion illustrates how Chaplin, in the role of a silent figure, listens to himself (*il s’écoute*) as other. Chaplin’s listening is Nancean resonance, a movement in which a subject refers back to itself as another subject, in constant motion of spatial and temporal non-presence. For Nancy, listening is a self’s relationship to itself, but without immediate self-presence. Moving in resonance, Chaplin makes the subject as other as he refers back to himself as other. I argue that Chaplin, through silent dialogue with himself by way of the other, makes his listening listened to. Chaplin refused to make his character speak because he believed speech would change the way in which his work would be listened to. In this

way, Chaplin makes people laugh by making himself understood (*se fait entendre*) as he makes himself listened to (*se fait écouter*). In answer to Nancy's question, I conclude philosophy is capable of meeting the demand of listening as both *l'entente* and *l'écoute* when it listens as Chaplin listens.

Introduction

This thesis contributes to a discussion of Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism by way of a reading of Jean-Luc Nancy's theory of listening, in which I consider Nancy's question, "Is listening something of which philosophy is capable?" (Nancy 2007:1).

Nancean listening is the attentiveness that is characteristic of dialogue. According to this theory, listening does not necessarily implicate hearing, nor is it the reverse of speech or hearing. My work on listening as independent of hearing draws on the philosophical writings of Derrida, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and Martin Heidegger, among other thinkers. I focus on Nancy's description of multiple listenings, in which he asks how philosophy can listen. I will examine how Chaplin listens through Nancean resonance and attention to others.

The act of listening - attending to and answering the other, rather than simply hearing the other's words – is present in the silent film character that Charlie Chaplin created. Throughout this thesis, I will use a close reading of the silent films of Chaplin, in which his Tramp figure could speak, but manages not to use speech. He communicates meaning without speaking. This close reading will illustrate my argument that Nancy's philosophy is capable of the active mediation of listening.

In Chapter One of this thesis, I will discuss a perceived lack of adequate listening to answer the demand of verbal output. Contemporary thinkers such as Gemma Corradi Fiumara hold logocentrism to blame for this inadequacy. This assumes logocentrism, a bias that privileges speech and holds *logos* or spoken word as primary, must avoid listening at any cost. I will challenge the notion that

speaking outweighs listening in modern culture, asking if it is possible to discuss speech without already having listened. Can listening be avoided?

For Derrida, in his Speech and Phenomena (Derrida 1973), speaker and listener are not a unified self. This type of unity ensues when one hears oneself speaking at the same time that one speaks or *s'entendre-parler*. The proximity in *s'entendre-parler* between listener and speaker creates self-present meaning and logocentric thinking. I will turn to Nancy's text on the philosophy of listening. A Nancean philosophy of listening establishes two words that both translate as listening, *l'écoute* and *l'entente*.

In this way, Nancy complicates the meaning of listening. Listening can be *écouter* or *entendre* - *l'écoute* or *l'entente*. *L'entente* is about hearing and understanding spoken word. *L'écoute* is attention others, and not just intelligibility of language. Nancy discusses listening as both *l'entente* and *l'écoute*. *L'écoute* is an attention to others, whereas *l'entente* refers to hearing and understanding. If *l'écoute* is attention to the other, then it is not a matter of listening to oneself as one is speaking, but of listening to the other and to oneself. Nancean listening is a relation to self and between self and other, in which the self is also the other.

In Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism, the origin of truth is always assigned to *logos*. In logocentric thinking, *logos* is a centre, a moment of presence and pure intelligibility. I will argue this deconstruction of logocentrism undervalues listening as it focuses on *s'entendre-parler*. This is when one hears oneself speaking while one is speaking. *S'entendre-parler* makes speaker and

listener immediately present both temporally and spatially because in this scenario, there is no difference between the speaker and the one speaking.

Nancy's inquiry about philosophy's ability to listen, I argue, is a questioning of Derrida's deconstruction of logocentric thinking. My examination of Nancy's work on listening shows how Derrida's *s'entendre parler* argument neglects *l'écoute*. Rather than deconstructing the *s'entendre parler* argument to prove how listening is essential to speech, Nancy forms a question of listening. This, I will discuss, is an inquiry as to whether philosophy is capable of *l'écoute* or only *l'entente*.

What becomes apparent in a reading of Nancy's multiple meanings of listening is Derrida's indifference to *l'écoute*. Nancy's response to Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism, in which he asks if the type of listening that philosophy is capable of is *l'écoute* or *l'entente* leads to another question of a hierarchy of sensible and intelligible forms of listening. By complicating the question of what listening is, I hold that Nancy's Listening (Nancy 2007) reveals a false dichotomy of *logos* and listening. I detect a similar split in the problem of listening recognised by Fiumara and others.

Chapter One tackles these questions about listening via a consideration of Chaplin's Tramp character. Chaplin listens through the attention to others that Nancy describes as *l'écoute*. A review of a selection of the literature by theorists that mention the work of Chaplin concludes no author has published on Chaplin's relation with and indissociability from the other. I link this aspect of Chaplin's uniqueness with Nancy's discussion on reflexive listening in Listening

(Nancy 2007). Lastly, Chapter One considers the possible reasons why Chaplin refused to let the Tramp speak in his films.

In Chapter Two, I will give a close reading of Chaplin's silent films featuring the Tramp in order to illustrate the dialogue between Chaplin's self as other and the audience. I will propose this is an attending to the other that is *l'écoute*. In the difference between speaker and listener, Chaplin avoids the immediate self-presence of logocentric thinking. As a means of investigating a source of logocentric thinking, I will examine two Heraclitus fragments from the fifth century B.C. In this discussion, *logos* is an attending to and an answering to the other. In the fragments, speaker and listener are in a call and response scenario. They therefore have difference, making them devoid of immediate self-presence. The call and response dialogue I will consider in my own interpretations of Heraclitus fragments in this chapter create a back and forth stretching movement. I will establish this movement as a type of listening that is more *l'écoute* than *l'entente*.

My re-readings in Chapter Two will suggest a musical lineage not found in other interpretations, such as Heidegger's readings of the same fragments. I will consider Heidegger's work on listening. It is in his readings of early Greek philosophy that Heidegger focuses on the meaning of *logos* in Heraclitus fragments. Self and other are in co-being. Heidegger's work on listening changes throughout his career from the notion that in discourse, listening is an attending to others, to his work on language that posits listening is prior to speech.

With my readings of Heraclitus fragments, I connect *logos* and listening. I argue *logos* is dialogic, and not logocentric. As a movement between a difference in a

call and a response, *logos* cannot be immediate self-presence. *Logos*, like Nancean resonance, is a movement of presence, and not immediate self-presence. Resonance is a back-turning movement. Chaplin's attention to others works in this way. He refers back meaning to himself as other, creating flow between audience and himself.

As I will discuss in Chapter Three, in Nancean resonance, vibrations amplify and extend. This vibrating system opens up sense. Chapter Three discusses how Chaplin's Tramp character is a place of resonance where he articulates a relation among himself, the audience and the film. His movement between the tensions, making his subject as other, is a movement of Nancean resonance. I show how this relational movement counters a critique from Peter Hallward. The challenge from Hallward claims Nancy's theory of relation is founded on non-relation. He claims Nancy bases this theory on singular principles, as does most of modern French philosophy. I will argue that Nancy, in Listening engages with these problems by way of a discussion on resonance and the multiple meanings of listening. The discussion in Listening on Nancean resonance counters Hallward's critique. I will explain in Chapter Three why Nancy considers the listener as a place of resonance through an investigation into readings of the fable of Echo and Narcissus by Spivak and by Derrida.

I will return in Chapter Four to Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism, arguing that in Listening, Nancy calls into question Derrida's specific focus on the immediacy of *entendre*. I will call this Nancy's turning around of Derrida's deconstruction of haptocentrism, in which Derrida questions the immediacy in Nancy's theory of touching, between touching and what is touched.

I argue Nancy responds to Derrida's critique of his theory of touching that deems touching immediate. As a solution to this problem, Derrida introduces *se toucher toi*, an immediacy and a break with immediacy. In his turning around of this critique, Nancy creates a similar phrase with *s'écouter*. This is listening to oneself as other. As Derrida speaks about *se toucher toi* in order to make a point about haptocentrism in Nancy's theory of touching, Nancy discusses *s'écouter* as a means of questioning the logocentric thinking in Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism.

To illustrate what *s'écouter* means, I will examine Chaplin's attention to others. In the Tramp character, there is difference between the audience and Chaplin's self as other. There is no immediate presence or presence to self in this difference because there is temporal and spatial difference, unlike in *s'entendre-parler*, which is immediate self-presence between self and speaker.

Chaplin and audience are not separated subject and object in a Cartesian sense. Chaplin becomes a subject through *s'écouter*, speaking as himself and as audience. I will explain how Chaplin resounds in Nancean resonance. Chaplin as a subject refers back to his self as other, as another subject and not as another self or a split self. He resounds as the audience. Chaplin and audience are indissociable. Chaplin's audience is other, but not an object. This forms a relation among audience, Chaplin and his self as other.

Through resonance and *s'écouter*, Chaplin refers to his self as other through the Tramp's striving for dignity in undignified situations. He uses the costume to communicate to the audience his striving for dignity. In his striving for dignity,

he refers to his self as other. This striving for dignity humanizes the Tramp as it makes people laugh.

In *se toucher toi*, the link between the ‘you’ and the self is indissociable. Chaplin’s dialogue with the audience is between a self and a ‘you’. It is not an inner dialogue or a split self. I will explain how in Nancy’s theory of listening, the subject that is listening touches itself as a “means of approaching the self” (Nancy 2007:8-13).

By challenging Derrida on an unfulfilled need for philosophical discussion of *l’écoute*, Nancy, in Listening (2007) responds to Derrida’s critique in On Touching – Jean-Luc Nancy (Derrida 2005a) with a question. He asks if it is the case that philosophy is only capable of *l’entente*. For Nancy, resonance as an immediacy that is not self-presence breaks with immediacy via interruption. Through a reading of the final scene of *City Lights* (Chaplin 1931), I will consider how through an interrelationship with the audience and the film, Chaplin refers meaning to himself as other. Chaplin therefore uses the powers of *l’écoute* in his Tramp character that is free from the spoken word. Chaplin, then is a paragon of listening and an archetype for Nancy’s thesis on listening.

Chapter Five is a study of Chaplin’s use of rhythm. I will suggest, by way of a discussion of rhythm in the work of Chaplin, that *l’écoute* and *l’entente* do not form a clear distinction between sensible and intelligible listening. I will argue *l’entente* achieves understanding through rhythm. In this way, rhythm and language are linked. This means speech is carried through rhythm and that rhythm, when words are not available, can speak.

Finally, in Chapter Six, I will revisit Spivak's reading of Echo. I will continue a discussion of Echo's loss of a subject-position as Spivak argues. I will also return in Chapter Six to Nancy's question about what kind of listening philosophy is capable of. Can philosophy listen as Chaplin listens?

Listening will emerge, in the chapters that follow, not as a new priority, but as a new idiom (Morton 2007:173) with which philosophy can discuss the *logos* as dialogic and not logocentric. In this thesis, I will consider how philosophy can listen as *s'écouter*, as Chaplin listens. Philosophy can be capable of listening by way of a relation and not a distinction between *l'écoute* and *l'entente*.

For Nancy, listening is beyond listening to the signification of sense or language. Chaplin makes his listening listened to. I will argue Chaplin kept the Tramp silent because a talking Tramp character would prevent Chaplin's interrelation with audience. It would ruin his difference and make him immediately present to himself.

This thesis is not a piece of film-philosophical enquiry, nor does it reflect a film-philosophy methodology. Therefore, I do not emphasise recent developments in the area of film-philosophy. According to Thomas E. Wartenberg in Thinking on Screen: Film as Philosophy (2007), there are two main schools of thought in the sub-discipline of film-philosophy (Wartenberg 2007:2-22). Firstly, there is a view that films are philosophical texts. For instance, one could read a film in the same way that one could read a dialogue by Plato. In another approach to film-philosophy, films are not philosophical texts. They can, however, function to popularize issues in philosophy. This view holds films are connected to philosophy, but they do not produce original philosophy. This means films ask philosophical questions such as, ‘What is it to be human?’ (Wartenberg 2007:2). Wartenberg suggests, “films can do philosophy” (Wartenberg 2007:3;9) because films address philosophical issues and confront philosophical questions. Films do something that written philosophical texts do not do. In this thesis, I do not consider Chaplin’s films to be philosophical texts, nor do his films ask philosophical questions or make philosophical arguments. This is a study that closely examines the Tramp character and the way this character illustrates how Nancean listening and resonance work. This examination is a means of discussing Nancean theories of listening and resonance. It is not an approach to the philosophy in Chaplin’s films or of his films as philosophical texts.

Chapter One: Listening Or How To Avoid Listening

1.1 The Problem of Listening

In this chapter, I will explore a current concern surrounding the act of listening in modern communication. This concern is based on a perceived disparity in the balance between listening and speaking. The problem of listening, well documented in contemporary social research, implies a lack of adequate skills to answer the demand of verbal output.

Recent literature on listening explores a debate across the Social Sciences and Humanities in works by Les Back (2007), Nick Couldry (2007, 2009), Robyn Penman and Sue Turnbull (2012), John D. H. Downing (2003), Charles Husband (1996, 2009), and Penny O'Donnell, et al. (2009), that has a recurring theme concerned with the steady coexistence of a proficiency in speaking and a deficiency in listening, suggesting that a penchant for verbal expression exceeds a capacity for listening. Held culpable for this disproportion is a tradition of logocentric thinking, which privileges speech. Derrida, in his earlier work, has explored how to displace this bias. Nancy implies Derrida neglects listening in his study on the privileging of speech.

I will set out the key question of this thesis from Nancy's text on his philosophy of listening. In this text, Nancy uses two terms for listening, *l'écoute* and *l'entente* to illustrate the multiple meanings of listening. Nancy asks if philosophy is capable of *l'écoute* or *l'entente*. Does a distinction between *l'écoute* and *l'entente* institute a clear hierarchy? Is the indecision between the terms undecidable? Considering Chaplin as a test case, I will question if it is possible for speaking to exceed a capacity for listening.

1.1.1 Logocentric Thinking

The function of listening, according to philosopher Gemma Corradi Fiumara, is to sustain the whole of language in its hearing and saying (Fiumara 1990:22). Fiumara, in The Other Side of Language: A philosophy of listening (1990) attributes the tendency in Western philosophy to ignore the notion of listening to logocentric thinking, a bias in which higher value is given to the spoken word (Fiumara 1990:23;29;31). The “problem of listening,” Fiumara maintains, lies in “a culture intoxicated by the effectiveness of its own ‘saying’ and increasingly incapable of paying heed” (Fiumara 1990:8). The problem Fiumara sees is an active move toward “non-listening” (Fiumara 1990:17). A culture governed by *logos*, she holds, is oblivious to what it means to listen. “The bearers of the word are predominantly involved in speaking, moulding and informing” (Fiumara 1990:23).

The logocentrism Fiumara refers to, like phonocentrism, is a bias grounded on presence.¹ Phonocentrism prioritises speech or voice (*phone*) and debases writing (Ong 1982:166). Spivak, in her 1985 essay, “Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography” (Spivak 1996:203-235), describes phonocentrism as a “concept where authority is supposed to spring directly from the voice-consciousness of

¹ This could also include glottocentrism, an idea attributed to semioticians such as Thomas Sebeok, Susan Petrilli, Augusto Ponzio and Paul Cobley, is a bias in “any thinking about signs, towards verbal communication” in human interaction, thereby neglecting all animal and plant semiosis. There is, as Cobley argues, semiosis in nonhuman activities - plants, animals and organisms. Biases like logocentrism, phonocentrism and phallogocentrism deal only with human culture and human interaction. Critiques of these biases do not discuss nonhuman interaction and are therefore glottocentric. In this way, Cobley argues glottocentrism is also ‘speciesism’ (Cobley 2010:224-225).

the self-present speaker...” (Spivak 1996:225). The prefix phono- comes from the Greek, *phone*, meaning, ‘sound’ or ‘voice’.

In Of Grammatology (1976), Derrida states in the “Exergue,” “logocentrism is also a phonocentrism: absolute proximity of voice and being” (Derrida 1997:3). When the voice is *heard* (understood), this is consciousness. Consciousness is the experience of pure auto-affection (Derrida 1997:20;98). Auto-affection is the action of hearing oneself speak as one is speaking. The self-relation or self-communication of auto-affection, as Leonard Lawlor points out, dates back to Aristotle in his remarks on god, in which Aristotle proposes god is a thought that thinks. This thinking is a thinking of thinking itself.³ “Auto-affection occurs when I affect myself, when the affecting is the same as the affected.”⁴ For Derrida, the Cartesian *cogito*, as a subject that is not connected to an object, is a problem of speech, of articulating the ‘I think’. The Cartesian *cogito* self-posit itself or ‘I’. I will show later how Derrida and Nancy twist this notion of unity in a self-positing ‘I’.

According to Derrida, in his study on the privileging of speech, in Husserl’s speaker, speech is self-presence, and a pure auto-affection. Derrida attributes this primacy of speech to the immediate proximity of speaker, listener and spoken word, where one hears oneself speak at the same time that one speaks. In this presence, the speaker, spoken word and listener are devoid of any temporal or

³ Metaphysics Book 12, Part 9

⁴ Lawlor, Leonard, 2006. “Jacques Derrida,” in: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/derrida/#BasArgImpTimHeaOneSpeSecSov>

spatial distance among them. This leads to the self-presentation of meaning, and self-present knowledge, which imply logocentrism.

In logocentrism, *logos* is primary. In Greek, *logos* could mean speech, logic, reason, or word of God. I will discuss the meanings of *logos* further in Chapter Two. In Derrida's discussion of logocentric thinking, *logos* is the idea of pure intelligibility (Glendinning 2004:7) (Glendinning 2011:47). Derrida wants to see a metaphysical tradition dismantled. In this tradition, being is discussed in terms of presence and meaning is discussed in terms of pure intelligibility or self-present "pure ideal *logos*" (Glendinning 2011:73). Derrida holds that metaphysics, from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger has "always assigned the origin of truth in general to the *logos*..." (Derrida 1997:11). Fiumara argues Western culture has a distorted conception of *logos* (Fiumara 1990:7), which renders listening a neglected aspect of *logos*. She recalls Heidegger's question about *logos*, "If such is the essence of speaking, then what is hearing" (Heidegger 1975:64)? Heidegger says in a 1959 lecture, "We hear language speaking." Although speaking and listening are traditionally put in opposition, are the two simultaneous (Heidegger 1971:123-124)? It would seem that what is hearing and what is listening are not the same. Returning to Fiumara and Heidegger's question, if a fuller meaning of *logos* entails listening as well as speech, then would not logocentric thinking prioritise speech for the purpose of being heard and understood?

Plato seems to avoid listening. He does, however, talk about listening at the beginning of the Republic (327c-328) when Polemarchus says to Socrates, 'But

could you persuade us...if we refused to listen' (Bickford 1996:1)? Susan Bickford, in The Dissonance of Democracy: Listening, Conflict and Citizenship (1996), observes that in Plato, politics focuses on both speaking and listening and the “dynamic between the two.” She claims that Plato gives no attention to the *role* of listening (Bickford 1996:1;4). This is disproven when one considers the fundamental role that listening plays in the Socratic method. As Plato privileges speech, he does emphasise listening, manifested in the Socratic method. In the Socratic method, Socrates does not teach; he listens. He brings others to the *logos* by asking questions to which he does not know the answers, and thereby draws the truth out from others. The Socratic method, through external dialogues encapsulated in story form, reveals the truth.

Like Bickford (1996), some political theorists, such as Benjamin R. Barber (1984, 1998) stress the “role of listening” in developing democratic theory and practices. In Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age (1984), Barber distinguishes between talk and speech. Stressing the importance of strong democratic discussion, he describes how talk became a synonym for politics. Although strong democratic talk entails listening, “in a predominantly representative system the speaking function is enhanced while the listening function is diminished” (Barber 1984:174).⁶

Despite listening’s role in democratic politics, it is predominantly construed as a lack. According to sociologist Les Back in The Art of Listening (2007), listening

⁶ Barber also has a chapter on “civilizing discourse” in A Place For Us: How to Make Society Civil and Democracy Strong (1998).

is “a skill that needs to be trained” (Back 2007:7). Like Fiumara, Back considers Western tradition to be a speaking culture and not a listening one. Back cautions against a shift to dialogic, participatory forms of social investigation (Back 2007:18). Arguing for a more careful and humble approach, Back feels that more speaking is being output than is being listened to (Back 2007:9;18;20).

John D.H. Downing (2003) also identifies a need to listen. Downing calls for listening in social research to increase, especially in terms of dialogic media audiences. He proposes “a political ethics of listening” to fill a gap in media user research, despite that a proliferation of talk across media remains (Downing 2003:632;626). “Listening, literally and figuratively, needs also to be central to the alternative media process and must be the ethical dimension at the heart of our models” (Downing 2003:632). Downing’s position is convincing in its contextualization of the listening debate within alternative media. He calls for a ‘listening principle’, criticizing media activists for communicating *at* audiences. He identifies rather a need to listen *to* audiences of dialogic media.

Downing cites Charles Husband’s work on the dangers of dialogic media. Husband’s, “Between Listening and Understanding,” (Husband 2009:441;443) expands on his previous work in the field about the human right “to be understood” (Downing 2003:632-633) (Husband 1996). Husband argues for an expansion of the right to communicate to a third generation human right. This

expansion, he believes, would require the addition of the right to be understood, “which values difference and transcends simple egocentrism” (Husband 1996).⁹

Nick Couldry introduces an intervention called, “The Listening Project,” and expounds on the rethinking of the “binary of listening and speaking” (Couldry 2009:579;582). Couldry discusses the relation between speaking and listening, arguing the listener is more crucial than the speaker. For Couldry, the process of listening is necessary in order to expand the value of voice. “...Only if there are listeners will people’s voices be registered.” The “crisis of voice” Couldry identifies, when taken with Downing and Back’s observations, suggests that a proliferation of talk in the media has not been accompanied by an upsurge in listening (Couldry 2009:579;582).

Pierre Bourdieu finds it difficult “to shake off the inattentive drowsiness” (Bourdieu 1999:614). In The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Society, Bourdieu and twenty-two researchers studied and analyzed for three years, “the new forces of social suffering that characterize contemporary societies” (Bourdieu 1999:614). For Bourdieu, an openness and attention to the other is rare in everyday life. This attentiveness that Bourdieu finds lacking is *comprendre* or ‘to understand’ in French. Bourdieu explains *comprendre* as, “taking people as they are” (Bourdieu et al., 1999:1;614).¹⁰

⁹ Husband, Charles, 1996. “The right to be understood: Conceiving the multi-ethnic public sphere,” in: Innovation: The European Journal of Social Sciences, June 1996, Vol. 9, Issue 2.

¹⁰ The chapter referred to was first published as “Comprendre,” in Theory, Culture and Society 12, no. 2 (1996).

These arguments assert that content creation and production are over-valued in relation to listening. While Downing sees a neglect of focus on a “consumption” stage, James F. Hamilton (2008:18) recasts the issue of consumption “into a matter of composition,” where composition is making, not just interpreting, creative activity (Hamilton 2008:237). Jodi Dean writes about participation on the Internet as fantasy or fetish, “...Frantic contributing and content circulation, may well involve a profound passivity” (Dean 2008:109).

1.1.2 Listening to Writing

The problem of listening that I have just discussed should not imply a condemnation or denial of speech. It is the notion that not enough attention can be paid to a surplus of speech and that listening can ameliorate this deficit of attention. With the problem of listening, it would seem that logocentric thinking is an affliction that can be cured by listening. Derrida, however, in questioning the search for truth in Western thought, finds a writing that is more originary than speech. He discusses in Of Grammatology, how writing displaces speech (Derrida 1997:37):

Deconstructing this tradition will therefore not consist of reversing it, of making writing innocent. Rather of showing why the violence of writing does not *befall* an innocent language. There is an originary violence of writing because language is first, in a sense I shall gradually reveal, writing.

Derrida explains this originary violence of writing operates as spacing. He describes this spacing as “The violence of forgetting.” Derrida considers how Plato deems speech a mode of committing *logos* to memory (Derrida 1997:37):

Writing, a mnemotechnic means, supplanting good memory, spontaneous memory, signifies forgetfulness. It is exactly what Plato said in the *Phaedrus*, comparing writing to speech as *hypomnesis* to *mnémè*, the auxilliary aide-mémoire to the living memory. Forgetfulness because it is a mediation and the departure of the logos from itself. Without writing, the latter would remain in itself.

It is in Platonism, where hierarchically structured binary oppositions rule existence, that speech and writing are emphatically separated. Plato's Phaedrus (274c-278c) contains a critique of writing, which he contrasts with the spoken word and Plato's Seventh Letter continues a discussion of the question of writing. Hannah Arendt, in her text, The Life of the Mind: Thinking, gives her translation of the Seventh Letter, in which Plato denounces the weakness and inflexibility of language and argues against writing (341b-343a) (Arendt 2003:168):

No one who possesses the very faculty of thinking (*nous*) and therefore knows the weakness of words, will ever risk putting down thoughts in discourse, let alone fixing them into so unflexible a form as written letters.

Plato's argument in the Seventh Letter is against writing because Plato feels writing will stop the exercising of people's memory and lead to forgetfulness as they rely on the written rather than spoken word. Writing cannot give account or answer questions. It is not decisive enough. It cannot choose to whom it addresses. In his Phaedrus, Plato contrasts the written and the spoken word (Arendt 1978:115-116). Ludwig Edelstein writes the Phaedrus "devaluates writing merely in contrast with speaking, conversing or teaching" (275c-275d):

He who thinks, then, that he has left behind him any art in writing, and he who receives it in the belief that anything in writing will be clear and certain, would be an utterly simple person, and in truth ignorant of the prophecy of Ammon, if he thinks written words are of any use except to remind him who knows the matter about which they are written.

Plato, in the Phaedrus, does not condemn writing, as he does in the Seventh Letter. The Phaedrus views writing as “a pleasure or pastime” (277e-278b). In the Phaedrus, Edelstein argues, Plato “considers that books, though they do not deserve to be treated with great seriousness, are nevertheless of serious import...” In the Seventh Letter, however, Plato denies that books can contain serious thought. He rejects serious writing, which withholds the truth from people (Edelstein 1966:83;85). In his theses on writing and speaking, does Plato forget about listening? Could listening to writing reconcile the incompatibility Plato sees between writing and speaking?

One philosopher that listens to writing is Jean-François Lyotard. He thinks listening to writing is not the same thing as hearing oneself writing. “When you hear, you merely hear something that has to be written.” “You’re ahead of the writing” (Lyotard 1989:vi). When one is writing, one is always already listening. One cannot hear writing unless one is already listening to what is being written. In this way, speaker or writer listens while stretching toward immediacy. In Chapter Five, I will argue that this immediacy is also an interruptive difference in rhythm.

1.1.3 Hetero-affection

Lyotard is always already listening to what he is writing. Can one discuss speech

without already having listened? Heidegger argues that in fact, listening precedes speech (Heidegger 1971:123). Instead of the idea of speech as an excess of composition and listening as consumption in deficiency, I suppose the paucity of speech, rather than of listening. In this context, what emerges between speaking and listening is unspoken. The unspoken or unsaid can be understood but not put into words. Such a reversal reveals unspokenness as excess and exposes more than one meaning of listening. Are Back, Couldry, Fiumara, et al., posing Derrida's question, "How to avoid speaking" (Derrida 1987)? In their attempts to resolve the problem of listening within an economy of lack, are they still in denial of listening, more asking, 'how to avoid listening'?

In auto-affection, I hear myself speak when I am speaking. Derrida, however, in his critique of Husserl,¹¹ argues the 'I' that affects myself is not the same as myself, and not purely autonomous. The 'I' is other. He refers to this impurity of auto-affection as 'hetero-affection'. "I am thinking about myself...insofar as I think about myself I am thinking of someone or something else at the same time." Derrida demonstrates that hearing-oneself-speak is not auto-affection, but hetero-affection, because there is a difference between speaker and hearer. The speaker and listener do not form a unified self, but rather a 'me and myself as other'. The difference is non-presence, meaning the self does not have immediate presence of self (Lawlor 2002:192). In an essay entitled, "The Need for Survival" (2000), Lawlor explains that this non-presence "derives from the experience of the other." The differentiation of 'me from myself' falls into a

¹¹ *La Voix et le Phénomène* (Derrida 1967) and *Speech and Phenomena* (1973)

momentary gap or lacuna. This is not a huge, yawning gap, but what Lawlor describes as, "... a miniscule hiatus differentiating me into the speaker and into the hearer." Derrida uses the German, *Augenblick*, or a 'blink of the eye' (Lawlor 2002:192).

What does the other experience in this moment of difference? Does the 'I' listen as other? In hetero-affection, do 'I' listen to myself as I am listening to someone or something else at the same time? I maintain the momentary gap that opens in the difference between me and myself could lead to something more than hearing-oneself-speak. I will consider the moment of difference that Derrida describes in terms of listening as defined by Nancy.

1.2 Multiple Meanings of Listening

1.2.1 *L'Entente* and *L'Écoute*

Listening, Fiumara laments, is neither dialectical nor assertive enough to keep it from obscurity, or to have any remunerative value (Fiumara 1990:9;31). Nancy, however, offers a lucrative discussion on a philosophy of listening. In Listening (2007), Nancy ponders philosophy's ability to listen. He draws a fine distinction between the words, *écoute* and *entente*. Nancy questions the indecision of listening, "*la mince indécision tranchante*" "*entre deux allures du meme*," calling *l'écoute* and *l'entente* two kinds of attention that walk side by side, "The one cannot...do without the other" (Nancy 2002:12-13) (Nancy 2007:2). The indecision that the philosopher confronts between *l'écoute* and *l'entente* is confounded by the simple translation of terms into English. *L'entente*, meaning "understanding," comes from *entendre*, meaning both "to hear" and "to

understand” (Nancy 2007:1;69). Thus, *l’entente* has a double meaning. *L’écoute* and *l’entente* may both be translated to the English, listening.

Thinking of listening in this way, it is more than just hearing, and the question, ‘How to avoid listening?’ could mean: *Comment ne pas écouter?* Or, *Comment ne pas entendre?* This thesis begins with Nancy’s indecision between *l’écoute* and *l’entente*. It focuses primarily on the multiple meanings of listening.

1.2.2 Tension and Attention

L’entente refers to ‘agreement’ or ‘a friendly understanding’. *Entendre*, ‘to hear or to understand’, relates to hearing and intelligibility. This is the understanding of speech. Etymologically, *entendre* and *entente* share the Latin root, *ten*, ‘to stretch, stretch out, distend, extend’ (Lewis, et al., 1951;1852). *Intendre* is Latin for ‘tend toward’ (Nancy 2007:69). *Entendre* is related to *attendere* ‘to pay attention’, from *attendo*. Literally, *attendo* or ‘to stretch to’, is usually, ‘to direct the attention towards’ or ‘attend to’. *Attendo* derives from the preposition, *ad* and the verb, *tendo* (Simpson 1977:64). *Ad* is ‘to’. *Ad* expresses ‘primarily direction towards’, or ‘to a point’ (Simpson 1977:10). *Tendo*, ‘to stretch, stretch out, extend, spread’, also gives basis to the words, *intendere*, ‘tend toward’, *ostendo*, ‘to hold out, expose to view, display, show’, *portendo* ‘to indicate, predict, reveal’ *ostento*, ‘to hold out, show, display, expose to view’, ‘to exhibit, demonstrate’ (Simpson 1977:318;417;418;458;473;598) (de Vaan, 2008).¹²

¹² de Vaan, Michiel Arnoud Cor, 2008. *Etymological dictionary of Latin and the Other Italic Languages*, Leiden & Boston: Brill.

The root meaning ‘to stretch’ implies a potential to expand and to create space for something else. If there is a thread running through these definitions of Latin verbs derived from or containing *-tendo*, it has to do with either showing and exposing something or stretching toward something that is revealed or shown. A similar thread runs through Nancy’s work in the idea of exposure or opening of thought to the world (James 2006:9). In the moment of exposure, thought opens onto and responds to an exteriority or outside, which is at the outer limits of thought itself (James/French 2005:3-4). Nancy’s idea of listening is stretching toward sonority and an inclination toward the opening of meaning (Nancy 2007:12;27). This tendency does not stop at the showing and exposing implied by the root of *entendre* and *entente*. Nancy considers what gives *l’écoute* distinction is a movement toward openness that he discusses as resonance. I will explain resonance more fully in Chapters Three and Four. The movement of resonance is inclined to expand and expose in a different way than *l’entente*’s way of showing something.

Nancy has a keen ear to perceive the difference as well as the similarity in the multiple meanings of listening. He explains listening as the indecision between a tension and an adequacy [*entre une tension et une adéquation*], where *adéquation* means ‘perfect adaptation’ (Nancy 2002:12-13). This could imply that *entendre* means to adapt to the circumstances in order to grasp some meaning. For Nancy, *écouter* is to stretch in the direction of possible, conceivable meaning. It would be puzzling if Nancy were to assign the meaning of the root *-tendo*, ‘to stretch’ to *l’écoute*, rather than to *l’entente*. However, Nancy expands on the role of tension in this stretching aspect of listening, “In *écouter*, the ear goes toward the tension, in *entendre*, the tension wins over the

ear” (Nancy 2006:69). *L’écoute* moves toward tension and delivers the tension to *l’entente*. The tension, however, does not arise from a difference between *l’entente* and *l’écoute*.

L’entente and *l’écoute* do not form a hierarchy, nor are they at war with each other. I argue *l’écoute* puts attention to the other into *l’entente*. Could all saying, discourse and meaning be *l’entente*? I believe the distinction between the resonant meaning perceived in *l’écoute* and the saying understood in *l’entente* does not institute as clear a hierarchy as being the sensible and the intelligible types of listening.

1.2.2 *S’Entendre-Parler*

The differentiation in French of two words for listening not only brings out the complexity of listening, but also implies listening’s undervalued position in Derrida’s critique of logocentric thinking. Derrida focuses instead on *l’entente* as the listening that speech requires. In Of Grammatology (Derrida 1997), for instance, Derrida does not mention *l’écoute*. Throughout the text, he uses *s’entendre-parler* or “hearing oneself speak” and “hearing (understanding)-oneself-speak” (Derrida 1997:7-8). This is also the case in Speech and Phenomena (Derrida 1973). In the chapter, “*La Voix Qui Garde Le Silence*” in La Voix et Le Phénomène (Derrida 1976:78-97), Derrida uses *s’entendre*, *entendus*, *je m’entende dans le temps*, *s’entendre-parler* (Derrida 1976:83-89).¹³

¹³ *Parler à quelqu’un, c’est sans doute s’entendre parler, être entendu de soi, mais aussi et du même coup, si l’on est entendu de l’autre, faire que celui-ci répète immédiatement en soi le s’entendre-parler dans la forme même où je l’ai produit* (Derrida 1976:89).

He uses *l'entente* or *entendre*, and not *l'écoute* or *écouter*. This is because *l'entente*, as hearing and understanding, is necessary in order for speech to be heard and understood. As I will discuss in this thesis, Nancy contends *l'écoute* is needed in order to stretch toward possible meaning.

Nancy's Listening (2007) brings to light Derrida's concentration on *entendre* and de-emphasis of *écouter* in his discussions of logocentrism and metaphysics of presence. For instance, Derrida states in De La Grammatologie, "*Parler à quelqu'un, c'est sans doute s'entendre parler, être entendu de soi*" (Derrida 1976:89). In Of Grammatology, Speech and Phenomena and Writing and Difference, Derrida uses the phrase, *s'entendre-parler* or 'hearing (understanding)-oneself-speak', rather than *écouter*, 'to listen' or *s'écouter*, 'to listen to oneself'. His use of *s'entendre-parler* presupposes a primacy of *entendre*. In privileging *l'entente* over *l'écoute*, does Derrida give higher status to the spoken word, which he claims is the perpetrator in phono-logocentrism? I diagnose an oppositional hierarchy in which listening is an absence to speaking's presence. An investigation into *l'écoute* and *l'entente* illustrates how the premise of listening is essential to speech. Listening is in fact, not the absence of speech. It re-sounds.

I will return to this notion of the re-sounding of listening in an exploration of Nancy's theory of resonance. In the next section, I will focus on Chaplin's Tramp figure, which will introduce a major thread that will run throughout this thesis: Chaplin's unique refusal to bring his speechless Tramp character into

sound cinema. This discussion will deal with Chaplin's conundrum, asking why Chaplin refused to make the Tramp speak.

1.3 The Tramp character

The speechless protagonist from silent Chaplin films offers a corpus of texts for investigating questions about *l'écoute* and *l'entente*. It is well known that Chaplin created a character that "may be as near to a 20th century 'everyman' as we have" (Boyer 1990:1979). The mechanisms of this character's communication are distinctly nonverbal. The Tramp character tends not to employ speech, yet he communicates a range of emotions and thoughts. Chaplin accomplishes this in general through *pantomime* - gestures, facial expressions, body motion and postures. Chaplin's Tramp character is mute and relies on pantomime to express himself.

1.3.1 The Art of Pantomime

In the 1890s, Chaplin worked in the music halls of London, where he learned the art of pantomime. Pantomime developed as a product of British licensing laws. These licensing laws were created in the eighteenth century. They prohibited the speaking of dialogue in unlicensed theatres (Robinson 1985:72). Later, the Theatres Act of 1843 defined what specific types of entertainment could legally be provided in music halls (Scheide 2006:114-115). The licensing laws forbade dialogue in most theatres and as a result, styles developed that avoided speech and used mime and music instead. Thus, pantomime interludes were one of the only dramatic acts that could legally be performed in the music halls during Chaplin's time.

Chaplin started as a film actor in 1914, and quickly became a director in his own right, and co-founded United Artists studio in 1919.²⁴ At the peak of his career, Chaplin's character's unspokenness was so successful that his silent comedies dominated cinemas everywhere, despite of the 'talkies revolution'. The talkies brought an obsession with spoken language and its comprehensibility (Mulvey 1998:23-24), whereas silent cinema had crossed language barriers and was widely understood. By 1936, however, talking films had become the standard.

1.3.2 Understanding the Tramp

Many authors have attempted to understand how Chaplin's gags work and why audiences continue to laugh at them. Film critique and film history are awash with texts about Chaplin. Writers that have relished Chaplin's work include, André Bazin in What is Cinema? (1967), Rudolf Arnheim in Film as Art (1957), the journalistic work of James Agee, David Robinson in his exhaustive Chaplin biography, Chaplin: His Life and Art (Robinson 1985) and in Chaplin: The Mirror of Opinion (Robinson 1984), the research of Kevin Brownlow and David Gill in *Unknown Chaplin* (Brownlow/Gill 1983), Brownlow's The Search for Charlie Chaplin (Brownlow 2005) and Walter Kerr's 1975 work, The Silent Clowns.

²⁴ Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, D.W. Griffith and Mary Pickford, four of the world's biggest stars seeking freedom from hegemonic Hollywood studio power, formed United Artists as an independent studio in 1919. When the threat of a Hollywood merger would have ended the star system, rather than relinquishing control over their own films and careers, Pickford, Fairbanks, Chaplin and Griffith became the shareholders and the distributors of United Artists, thereby maintaining their artistic and financial freedom.

Film philosophers, such as Stanley Cavell (1988:176), Slavoj Žižek (2006) and Gilles Deleuze (1989) give us several discussions of Chaplin's work. Deleuze, in Cinema 2 (Deleuze 1989:173-181), argues Chaplin's comedy derives from an "index of lack" or a "gap in the narrative" (Deleuze 1989:165). Deleuze, Žižek and Cavell, however, are not the only philosophers to refer to the work of Chaplin.

Emmanuel Levinas, in Entre Nous: On thinking-of-the-other, refers to *The Gold Rush* (Chaplin 1925), in which the Tramp is stranded inside a cabin that is teetering on a cliff edge during a blizzard (Levinas 2006:12). The closedness of the interior of the cabin that confines the Tramp, Levinas likens to a self-sensing subject. As the Tramp devises a way of balancing the cabin by stretching his own body to distribute his weight across the cabin floor, a new horizon opens to the world. Levinas believes this openness means that the Tramp thinks and has consciousness (Levinas 2006:12).

Whether or not the Tramp is thinking, Hannah Arendt, in "Charlie Chaplin: The Suspect" (Arendt 1978:110-115),²⁵ considers Chaplin's Tramp as representative of "the entrancing charm of the little people" (Arendt 1978:111). As a suspect, the Tramp is a pariah, at odds and in conflict with the world, "but always and everywhere he is under suspicion..." (Arendt 1978:111). Rather than considering the speechless Tramp an outsider, Žižek speaks of the voice as a foreign intruder in *The Great Dictator* (Chaplin 1940), identifying the problem of domesticating

²⁵ Arendt, Hannah, 1944. "The Jew as Pariah: A Hidden Tradition," *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Apr., 1944), pp. 99-122, Indiana University Press <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4464588>

the voice.²⁶ According to Žižek, Chaplin as the Jewish barber represents the silent cinema because the barber character is innocent and lacks guilt or depth. Chaplin also plays the role of the dictator. Žižek feels the barber represents the talkies. The talkies, he claims, do have depth, guilt, and culpability. In Chapter Three, I will give a critique of Žižek's argument about *The Great Dictator*.

Walter Benjamin reflects on Chaplin's effect on audiences in the 1936 essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin 1969:217-251). It is, however, in Benjamin's 1929 essay, "Chaplin in Retrospect" (Benjamin 2008:335-337), which he begins with a discussion of *The Circus* (Chaplin 1928), that Benjamin explores poet Philippe Soupault's comments on Chaplin's work. Soupault argues Chaplin relates to the film as a poet (Benjamin 2008:335).²⁷ In the essay, Benjamin confirms that Chaplin engages with the film's audience through laughter (Benjamin 2008:337). In the last three sentences of the essay, Benjamin briefly discusses audience laughter. In this way, he picks up on the theme of an essay by Chaplin published in 1918 in American Magazine, "What People Laugh At" (Chaplin 1918:134-137). In "What People Laugh At," Chaplin credits his knowledge of human nature to his success. While Theodor Adorno contemplates a relation between power and laughter, in which "...a laughing audience is a parody of humanity" (Adorno 1996:57-58), human nature, Chaplin tells us, dictates that seeing people in an undignified and

²⁶ *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema*, 2006. Directed by Sophie Fiennes, S. UK: P Guide. Written by Slavoj Žižek.

²⁷ Soupault, Philippe, 1928. "Charlie Chaplin," in: Europe: Revue Mensuelle, 18 (November 1928) pp. 379-402. Soupault later expanded this article into a monograph, Charlot, published in 1931.

embarrassing situation is funny. Chaplin believes human nature is the tendency to experience within oneself the emotions of the people one sees on the stage or the screen (Chaplin 1918:134-137). Agee believes Chaplin got laughs less from the gags themselves, than from the subtle variations of his “physical and emotional attitudes toward the gag” (Agee 2000:401). Robinson avers on this point about Chaplin’s relation with his gags, “The crucial point of Chaplin’s comedy was not the comic occurrence itself, but Charlie’s relationship and attitude to it” (Robinson 1985:113). Chaplin, however, explains in “What People Laugh At,” that his relation to the gag is not a key component to what people laugh at. The large part of his comedy is that relationship he forges with the audience. He builds this relation through the Tramp.

Chaplin’s work is discussed in the literature often. Although some of these discussions do consider audience reaction, few thinkers have attempted to comprehend the remarkable relationship among Chaplin, the Tramp and the audience. None of the writers mentioned above, except for Chaplin himself, have discussed Chaplin’s unique relation with the audience via himself as other.

Alenka Zupančič, however, in her 2008 book, The Odd One In: On Comedy, contemplates the strange power of Chaplin’s gags to immediately connect with his audience. She calls this Chaplin’s “short circuit” (Zupančič 2008:8). I will discuss in Chapter Three, Zupančič’s example from *The Gold Rush* that she uses to discuss Chaplin’s comic handling of hunger. “...The scene is no longer constructed simply upon the discrepancy between what Charlie really is and how the other sees him (as a chicken), but adds something else...” (Zupančič 2008:19).

Zupančič refers to ‘Charlie’, as if the character on the screen were named ‘Charlie’. Some authors make this mistake despite that the character is named ‘the Tramp’.²⁸ In this thesis, the screen character is known as ‘the Tramp’. Author Alistair Cooke might find this separation surprising. In an essay entitled, “Charles Chaplin: The One and Only” (Cooke 1977:9-44), Cooke discusses what he feels is a “startling disparity” between Chaplin and the Tramp. Cooke recalls an anecdote from his time working for Chaplin, in which he observed his employer once shrugging off adoring fans. Cooke explains, Chaplin felt this adulation was meant for ‘the little fellow’ and not for him (Cooke 1977:18;23). The man, the real Charlie Chaplin is not the fictional Tramp character depicted on the screen. Likewise, in this thesis, ‘Chaplin’ refers to the multi-skilled artist, Chaplin as director, as actor and more.²⁹ ‘The Tramp’, as I discuss him in this thesis, is a fictional screen character, but Chaplin’s Tramp is actually founded in reality.³⁰ His gags are based on the notion of human dignity that Chaplin observed in life. Chaplin uses undignified situations to communicate the Tramp’s

²⁸ In French, the character is known by the name *Charlot*, which makes the distinction clear.

²⁹ “He did everything,” Tim Durant of United Artists says of Chaplin. “He could not only write, direct, he could do the choreography, he wrote the music, he cut the picture, he financed it, he starred in it and he did the casting” (Brownlow 2010:52).

³⁰ T.S. Eliot gets this wrong when he says in 1923, ‘The egregious merit of Chaplin is that he has escaped in his own way from the realism of the cinema and invented a rhythm. Of course, the unexplored opportunities of the cinema for eluding realism must be very great’ (Seldes 2001:361). Gilbert Seldes quotes Eliot in his 1924 book, The Seven Lively Arts. Seldes, Gilbert, 2001. The Seven Lively Arts, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., p. 361.

desperate attempt to maintain his dignity. I will explain in the following chapters how this situation results in audience laughter.

This striving for dignity is a crucial difference that sets Chaplin apart from virtuoso silent film comedian of the same era, Buster Keaton. Similarly, the two silent comedians, Chaplin and Keaton, both tend to refrain from using lip movements of their characters. Neither actor tends to do much talking on the screen. Chaplin, however, ‘says’ a great deal more than Keaton says without moving his lips. Arnheim marvels at Chaplin’s decision to act in this way (Arnheim 1957:106):

Hundreds of the most various situations in human relationships are shown in his films, and yet he did not feel the need to make use of such an ordinary faculty as speech. And nobody has missed it.

Conversely, Keaton does everything in a completely straight-faced way in his films. He truly masters the deadpan³¹ comedy technique. While Keaton deadpans resolutely throughout a gag situation, Chaplin mimes the Tramp’s striving for dignity in an undignified situation. Arnheim elaborates on a few key non-talking gag moments of Chaplin’s Tramp (Arnheim 1957:106-107):

He does not *say* that he is pleased that some pretty girls are coming to see him, but performs the silent dance, in which two bread rolls stuck on forks act as dancing feet on the table (*The Gold Rush*). He does not argue,

³¹ To ‘deadpan’ means to say or do something amusing while affecting a serious and expressionless manner.

he fights. He avows his love by smiling, swaying his shoulders, and moving his hat.

Chaplin uses this speechless, yet expressive method to exploit an awareness of human complexity. In Chapter Two, I will expand on Chaplin's way of doing this. I will discuss a paradox about cinema that philosopher and sociologist Edgar Morin describes in his use of the Tramp as an example to illustrate a point about complexity.

Morin calls cinema, like poetry and literature, "schools where we learn to understand human beings" and human complexity (Morin 1998:4). His transdisciplinary work ranges widely: cinema, visual anthropology, action research, sociology, philosophy, education, ecology, and the natural sciences (Montuori 2004:349;355). His work on complexity traces back to his 1956 book, The Cinema, or The Imaginary Man, in which he considers the cinema experience as social phenomenon and the cinema screen as a permeable membrane mediating between film spectator and film spectacle.³²

In his later work on complexity, Morin makes the point that film audiences are more understanding in the cinema than in real life (Morin 2006:29;31). He illustrates this in an example of seeing a tramp in the street versus seeing Charlie Chaplin as the Tramp on the cinema screen. Morin holds that someone who can be "disgusted by a tramp he sees in the street will open his heart to the movie

³² As Lorraine Mortimer describes in her Translator's Introduction (Mortimer 2005:xi-xxxix) in: Morin, Edgar, 1956/2005. *The Cinema, or The Imaginary Man*. trans. by Lorraine Mortimer, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. xi-xxxix.

tramp, Charlie Chaplin” (Morin 1999:53). The film spectator, here, demonstrates greater powers of attention in the cinema than in the street.³³ Morin’s understanding is less *entendre*, and more *comprendre*. This recalls Bourdieu’s argument that *comprendre* means attention to others (Bourdieu et al. 1999:1;614).

Morin chooses the Tramp as his chief example although the same claim can be made of most screen characters and audiences. I suggest Morin is responding to Chaplin’s relation with the audience and unique method for making people laugh. Morin’s choice of Chaplin’s silent character is important to this thesis, because, as I will reveal in the following chapters, this distinctly non-talking, yet dialogical character provides a strong example of an attention to others. Morin thinks of the Tramp as a typical character that anyone might encounter in daily life. He uses the Tramp example to demonstrate a contrast between understanding in the cinema and understanding in real life. By ‘understanding’, Morin means empathy, sympathy, and not deploring the actions of characters “who in ordinary circumstances would be foreign or revolting” (Morin 1999:53).³⁵

³³ For UNESCO and French government, Morin has produced publications on complex thought in education, including Seven Complex Lessons in Education for the Future in 1999. He outlines the sixth lesson in a chapter called, “Understanding Each Other” (Morin 1999:49-55), in which he recognises two types of understanding: “intellectual or objective, and human intersubjective” (Morin 1999:49).

³⁵ Rather than addressing philosophical issues of empathy and sympathy, study of film and media audiences has been preoccupied by arguments about whether texts have ‘effects’ on their viewers/readers (Cumberbatch, 2009). Even those audience studies of the last 25 years that have taken readers’ meanings seriously

This concern of Morin's is akin to the work of Charles Sanders Peirce³⁶ and his concept of "creative love" and "reason as a form of love" (Colapietro 1989:93).³⁷ Peirce's work with Victoria Welby considers creative love as love directed toward the other as other, intended for the other's otherness. "It is love for the other, directed without ulterior motives toward the other as other" (Petrilli/Ponzio 2005:69-70). Peirce's theories of creative love and reasonableness were developed in recent years by biosemioticians Susan Petrilli and Augusto Ponzio. Petrilli and Ponzio discuss Peirce's love in a chapter entitled, "Love and Logic" in their co-written volume, Semiotics Unbounded (Petrilli/Ponzio 2005:64-70). Petrilli and Ponzio describe Peircean love as "the power to transform one's horror of the stranger, the alien, one's fear of the *other*...into sympathy for the other" (Petrilli/Ponzio 2005:64;69). As fear of the other is transformed, what develops is not merely an awareness of the other, but a relation with the other that is based on otherness (Petrilli/Ponzio 2005:64). Does Peirce's creative love express the greater powers of attention discussed by Morin? I argue what both Morin and Peirce are concerned with is an attention to

(Hermes 2009) have tended to sidestep the issue of whether media texts might produce a kind of ethical engagement that positively differs from that of everyday interaction.

³⁶ Peirce, though he described himself as "first and foremost a logician," is considered the founder of pragmatism. This is "the view that our theories must be linked to experience or practice" (Misak 2004:1;16). Nathan Houser explains Peirce's pragmatism as "a method of sorting out conceptual confusions by relating meaning to consequences" (Houser 1992:xxii). Peirce is also credited for developing his semiotic theory of information, representation, communication, and knowledge, objective idealism, fallibilism and evolutionary cosmology (Houser 1992:xxii).

³⁷ Peirce develops his associated doctrine of "agapism" in an 1893 paper entitled, "Evolutionary Love." In agapism, "the law of love is operative in the world" (Houser 1992:352).

the other that Nancy calls *s'écouter* or listening.

1.4 A Question of *S'écouter*

Nicolas Davey argues in Unquiet Understanding (2006:181), the unsayable is not beyond language; it can in principle be put into words. (Davey 2006:181-182). The Tramp's gestures are silent not because Chaplin refused to allow the character to speak. For Heidegger, remaining silent (*Schweigen*) is a mode of discourse. *Schweigen* is dialogical silence (Gorner 2007:91).⁴⁴

This investigation could be one that identifies silent movements and their meanings to produce a kind of grammar of nonverbal communication aligned with linguistic structures. Alternatively, it could compile a catalogue of cinematic gestures as Ray Birdwhistell did with body motion and gestures in his 1952 and 1973 work on kinesics.⁴⁵ This investigation will show, however, that Chaplin's repertoire cannot be reduced to a system of signs or meanings.⁴⁶

As Davey explains, for Gadamer, language is not opposed to the unsayable

⁴⁴ One who cannot speak, and has something to say, is *Schweigt. Stumm* in German Means 'mute', 'dumb' or 'speechless' (Olaf Thyen et al. 1999:716;1336;1528;1697). *Stumm* or *Schtumm* is also Yiddish for keeping silent about something potentially dangerous if it were spoken, as in, 'keep it under your hat'. In this usage, *Stumm*'s meaning could be closer to *Schweigen* or the secret which Derrida avoids speaking (Derrida 1987:18-26). The phrase, 'keep *stumm*' could mean, 'there is no secret'.

⁴⁵ Birdwhistell, R. L. 1952. Introduction to Kinesics: An Annotated System for the Analysis of Body Motion and Gesture, Louisville, University of Louisville Press, and Birdwhistell, R. L. 1973. Kinesics and Context: Essays on Body-Motion Communication, Middlesex, England, Penguin University Books.

⁴⁶ "Shrugging of shoulders, head-shakes, nods and so on we call signs first and foremost because they are embedded in the use of our verbal language" (Wittgenstein 1967:114e).

(Davey 2006:181). The said illuminates the unsaid. “...*It is language that allows the unsayable to have its place in a given speech world*” (Davey 2006:181). Language and the unsaid are not in opposition. Thus, the sayable or the said can be silent. Davey relates this notion to Hans-Georg Gadamer’s theory of language and meaning, arguing that speech expresses the unexpressed. Davey’s position could be important in my examination of Chaplin’s resoluteness in preventing the Tramp from speaking. If, in fact, the unsayable can be put into words, then what reasons could Chaplin have had for leaving the Tramp speechless? Is the sayable silent or unsayable in Chaplin? Unsayable is not a ‘decaffeinated’ concept in which the malignant element is removed, such as “coffee without caffeine” (Žižek 2005:143). Yet, whereas decaffeinated coffee is meant to taste like real coffee, but does not, the sayable allows “the unsayable to come forth” (Davey 2006:181). The unsayable, the other, Davey tells us, is part of language, indissociable from the subject (Davey 2006:179). Chaplin says the unsayable, as he is, I will explain in the following chapters, indissociable from the other.

In his early work, Nancy, like his contemporaries, attempts “to overturn traditional philosophical accounts of the subject as an autonomous self-grounding entity” (James 2006:13). In *Ego Sum* (Nancy 1979), the *cogito* gives an image of a subject. “It figures itself” (James 2006:58). ‘It resembles nothing’ [*il ne ressemble à rien. La ressemblance est exigée parce que impossible*] (Nancy 1979:83). The subject is a self-positing nothing.

In *À l’écoute* (Nancy 2002), the original French title of *Listening* (Nancy 2007), Nancy thinks outside and beyond subjectivity. When the *à* preposition precedes

l'écoute, this situates the subject in the position to be listening. This is to say, with *à l'écoute*, a subject is in the position to listen, whereas *l'écoute* without the *à* is the general noun, 'listening' (Nancy 2007:32).⁴⁹ *Être à l'écoute de*, means literally, 'to be listening to' and 'to be (always) ready to listen'.

Nancy, thinking beyond subjectivity, describes listening as "a sonorous present" with access to the self, and not self-presence (Nancy 2007:12-13).

"To be listening is thus to enter into tension and to be on the lookout for a relation to self: *not*, it should be emphasized, a relationship to 'me'...or to the 'self' of the other...but to the *relationship in self*, so to speak, as it forms a 'self' or a 'to itself' in general..." (Nancy 2007:12).

Nancy discusses a reflexive listening in his chapter, "Foreword: Ascoltando" in Peter Szendy's Listen: A History of Our Ears. Nancy believes music listens to itself (Nancy 2008a:xiii;146). The distinction Nancy makes between that which 'makes itself heard' (*se fait entendre*) and that 'listens to itself' (*il s'écoute*) sets the stage for Szendy's question of listening: "Can one make a listening listened to?" (Nancy 2008a:x):

Sound is at the same time *struck* (pinched, rubbed, breathed, etc.), *returned*, and *heard* (*entendu*, understood) in the precise sense that it is *understood* (*s'entend*) or that it *makes itself heard* (*se fait entendre*): and for that, in that, it *listens to itself* (*il s'écoute*).

⁴⁹ Nancy points out that the phrase, *être à l'écoute* was originally a military phrase referring to spying and eavesdropping. (Nancy 2007:4).

S'écouter is realised in Chaplin's Tramp character. Chaplin manages to make himself understood (*se fait entendre*) as he makes himself listened to (*se fait écouter*). By listening to himself as other, Chaplin makes his listening listened to. He is not self-present either in a temporal or a spatial context. Listening to himself as other creates a difference among Chaplin, the other and his self as other. In this way, Chaplin's difference between self and other is de-centred. The difference, in avoiding immediate self-presence spatially and temporally prevents Chaplin's self from becoming a centre. He does not listen in terms of hearing himself speak (*s'entendre-parler*) or auto-affection. His listening to himself is not in absolute proximity to self or other. He can be understood (*s'entendre*) and listened to (*s'écouter*) without actually having spoken. *S'écouter* has nothing to do with speaking immediate speech. Chaplin, by way of the other, listens to himself through a movement of resonance with himself as other. This movement is *s'écoute* in that he listens to himself resounding.

Nancy envisions a place where vibrations resound as their natural frequencies are combined with other vibrations. In this intensifying movement, vibrations resound from within a body and reverberate outside of that body. Nancy treats the body as a vibrating system, in which sense opens up, amplifies and extends. When a sonorous body listens to itself (*il s'écoute*), it makes itself listened to.

Practically, resonance is when a frequency is applied at or near the natural frequency of a vibrating system and forces vibrations at the frequency of the one applied, resulting in vibrations of higher amplitude and longer duration (Firth, Grant, Wray 1973:237-238). This means that a vibrating system will pick out tones that correspond to its natural frequencies and exaggerate those frequencies

(Richardson 1947:56). For instance, most stringed instruments have a hollow wooden case filled with nothing but air. The air in the box, forced into vibration by the string, emits vibrations similar to those of the string. The combination of string tension and resonance amplifies volume and prolongs duration of the sound (Richardson 1947:76;98). Resonance resounds from within the body of a violin and reverberates outside in a concert hall.

Nancy mixes his metaphors at times, evoking images of a resonance chamber, a reverberation chamber and an echo chamber interchangeably. A concert hall, like a cave, is a reverberation chamber or echo chamber - a large, hollow, enclosed space with walls made of hard material to reflect sound waves. The reflections cause the sound to prolong and intensify, creating an echo. This is reverberation (Stephens/Bate 1950:285). He talks about the resonant subject echoing and about the silence you hear when you hear “your own body resonate, your own breath, your heart and all its resounding cave” (Nancy 2007:21). This would assume that the echoing is happening outside the body, because there would not be echoing or reverberation inside a resonance chamber. When Nancy refers to Plato’s parable of the cave from the Republic Book VII (514a-517d), he is correct to say that voices reverberated, because a cave is a reverberation room as well as a place to throw shadows on the wall. The voices and movements of the people moving the objects would reverberate in the cave, making audible echoes (Republic 515c). Nancy is precise in stating there would be an echo of voices in the cave and that this fact is simply forgotten due to Plato’s heavy emphasis on vision and light. Most research on the parable of the cave includes interpretations of the cave as the world of experience in contrast to the real world of thought

outside the cave,⁵⁰ while some research draws parallels between cinema and the cave.⁵¹

1.5 Conclusion: Voice and the Call of the Other

This theory of resonance is key to Nancy's argument in Listening because resonance gives alterity to *s'écouter*. Resonance puts the other in *s'écouter*. As I will explain in Chapter Three, resonance makes the subject as other because meaning is referred back to a self as other. Listening as *s'écouter* by way of the movement of Nancean resonance is not an absence to speech's presence. Listening is not a deficiency of consumption. It is an attending to the other and to the self as other. Contrary to the 'problem of listening', which I have discussed in this chapter, logocentric thinking cannot ignore listening (*s'écouter*) and merely rely on hearing or understanding (*entendre*). If listening's main function, as Fiumara argues is to sustain language (Fiumara 1990:22), then listening could be a requirement of intelligibility. I will go on to show that listening is not simply to bear the weight of language. Listening (*s'écouter*) gives attention to the other. This is its function in relation to *logos*. When *logos* is intelligibility, as it is

⁵⁰ Annas, J. 1981. *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, pp. 242, 271.

Cross, R. C. & Woosley, A. D. 1964. *Plato's Republic: A Philosophical Commentary*, London, Macmillan.

Santos, G. X. (ed.) 2006. *The Blackwell Guide to Plato's Republic*, Oxford & Malden, Mass: Blackwell.

⁵¹ Stephen Rainey, 2006. "Plato's Cave and the Big Screen," in: From Plato's Cave to the Multiplex: Contemporary Philosophy and Film, Barbara Gabriella Renzi & Stephen Rainey (Eds), Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press. pp. 98-105.

in logocentric thinking, hearing one's own speech while one is speaking is an immediate proximity, which creates self-present meaning.

Nancy creates a mock discussion with Derrida in his, "Vox Clamans in Deserto" (2006:38-49),⁵² which is an essay consisting of imagined conversations with philosophers about voice. Nancy asserts voice and speech are not the same thing. Voice, Nancy says, comes before speech. He addresses Derrida, "Because I know you, I recognized your voice as you were coming toward me, long before I could make out what you were actually saying" (Nancy 2006:38). In this way, voice is prior to intelligibility; voice comes before language.

In response to Nancy's argument, Derrida might say that the voice is consciousness (Derrida 1973:80). By arguing in "Vox Clamans in Deserto" that the voice is a prelude to language and prior to speech (Nancy 2006:39;41), is Nancy saying the voice is "fit for universality"? This fitness for universality, Derrida explains in Speech and Phenomena, is "an absolutely pure auto-affection, occurring in a self-proximity that would in fact be the absolute reduction of space" (Derrida 1973:79). In this pure auto-affection of hearing oneself speak or *s'entendre-parler*, "no obstacle" meets the voice. The voice does not pass through the outside world. In this way, space is reduced.

Voice, Nancy proposes in response to Derrida, is the "resonant side of speech" (Nancy 2006:47). Voice resonates, thus avoiding its own contradiction. In always

⁵² In this English translation by Simon Sparks in Multiple Arts: The Muses II (Nancy 2006:38-49), of Nancy's words it is unclear whether he means to use *l'écoute* or *l'entente*.

addressing the other, the voice can make itself listened to, but not by itself (Nancy 2006:47). This is consonant with Derrida's further argument that "Hearing oneself speak is not the inwardness of an inside that is closed in upon itself; it is the irreducible openness in the inside..." This openness is made possible by time (Derrida 1973:86). In this thesis, I will discuss how Nancean resonance is non-presence.

Derrida's philosophy is founded on *logos* as immediate presence. After the question of being and the question of difference, Nancy proposes philosophy as a plurality of being. Whether the question is of being, difference or sense, I ask, 'What is listening'? In Listening, Nancy asks what kind of listening is philosophy capable of. I will answer this question in my study of Chaplin's silent comedies. I ask if philosophy can listen as Chaplin listens - as both *écoute* and *entente*?

The Tramp's life spanned from the prohibition of dialogue in the music halls, to the preoccupation with speech and Hollywood hegemony. Chaplin released the Tramp's last film, *Modern Times* (Chaplin 1936), in the middle of what Agee calls, "an avalanche of talk" (Agee 2000:410). In 1949, Agee remarks on the fate of silent comedians during the time of the talkies revolution, "The only man who really survived the flood was Chaplin, the only one who was rich, proud and popular enough to afford to stay silent" (Agee 2000:410). There seems to be a short circuit in Chaplin's refusal to make the Tramp speak which led to the eventual demise of the character, but also the success of *Modern Times* (1936)

and *City Lights* (1931). In investigating the grounds for this short circuit, this thesis will consider Chaplin's repertoire of movements and gestures.⁵³

What worried Chaplin was not a fear or reluctance of embracing technology, but a strong concern about how talkies would change audience listening. His audience was not bound to silence in their seats by amplified, synchronised dialogue. Chaplin's audience was free to vocalize and to move about during the film. Chaplin sat in audiences and listened to his audience, as he would do on a music hall stage. Modern day audiences are very different from those of Chaplin's time. 1910s and 1920s cinemas were more similar to the English music halls than to today's cinemas. For instance, talking was permitted during the film. Audiences could sing, eat, drink, laugh or shout without missing any lines. Music was a key part of the audience's environment inside a cinema of the time. Musical accompanists sat between the audience and the screen, playing alongside the action on the screen.⁵⁴

If Chaplin did bring the Tramp character into the talkies, then according to Derrida's thinking in Speech and Phenomena, the Tramp's voice would have been in absolute proximity with himself speaking. The speechless Tramp's voice passes through a difference, an outside that is the audience, clearing him of

⁵³ These are kinesic and microkinesic movements. Kinesics can mean gestures, manners, and postures (Poyatos 2002b:119;121). Microkinesics refers to subtler movements and facial expressions that might not be consciously registered or noted in everyday life (Balazs 1970:65). Béla Balazs calls these facial expressions in silent cinema, "microphysiognomy" (Balazs, 1970:65).

⁵⁴ Giunta, C., 2010. "Beyond the Soundtrack: representing music in cinema," In: Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television, 30, 132 - 133.

immediate self-presence. The Tramp could not, in a talkie, have this difference with and interrelationship with the audience because in *s'entendre-parler*, the Tramp would hear himself speak in self-proximity. Nancy puts forth the question whether philosophy can listen as *l'écoute* or only as *l'entente*. *L'écoute*, for Nancy, is resonant listening and resonance is a spacing movement without interval. This would ruin Derrida's argument in Speech and Phenomena. For if a voice keeps silent, thereby eschewing the self-proximity and "absolute reduction of space" (Derrida 1973:79) of hearing (understanding)-oneself-speak (*s'entendre-parler*), then it is not present to itself.

The notion that logocentric thinking prioritises speech for the purpose of being heard and understood has roots in Heraclitus.⁵⁵ One of the meanings of *logos* is discourse. Heraclitus offers his theory of the unity of opposites. The coming together of opposites in struggle is conveyed through discourse (Burnet 1920:133) (Jaspers 1966:17-18). Discourse can be either spoken or written.

In the next chapter, I will give a rereading of Heraclitus fragments, arguing that dialogue requires an attending to the call of the other. Through a reading in Chapter Two of Heraclitus fragments and a close reading of Chaplin's silent work, I will argue *logos* is an attending to as well as an answering to. In this way, I will show that by way of an attention to the other, this dialogue between listener and speaker is not immediately present. Speaker and listener – in this

⁵⁵ "Listening not to me but to the Logos it is wise to agree...that all things are one" (Kirk 1962:65).

case, call and response - are different, and are not in immediate self-presence. I argue this attending to the other is a form of listening, in which a back-turning motion is similar to the movement of resonance. Similarly, Chaplin's dialogue with himself as other involves a type of listening to himself that is not auto-affection. Chaplin's listening is an attention to the other. He refers to himself as other, thereby avoiding immediate self-presence.

This rereading of Heraclitus will challenge the origins of logocentric thinking and will reveal in the fragments, a connection between dialogue and a form of listening that is an attending to the call of the other. Antiphonic discourse, evident in these Heraclitean fragments, assures that a call and a response are separated in time and space, and this difference makes immediate presence impossible.

Chapter Two: Chaplin Disclosed

In Chapter One of this thesis, the distinction between *l'écoute* and *l'entente* is not a binary opposition where hearing is physiological, and listening is psychological,⁵⁶ nor does it imply a hierarchy of forms of listening between *l'écoute* and *l'entente*.⁵⁷ Heidegger's work on listening in 1927's Being and Time (Heidegger 1962) emphasizes hearing and 'listening to', along with speaking as belonging to discourse. In a section on Being-there, discourse and language (Heidegger 1978:203-211), Heidegger states, "Being-with develops in listening to one another" (Heidegger 1978:206). By "listening to," he means "Dasein's existential way of Being-open as Being-with for others" (Heidegger 1978:206). Understanding in discourse comes when Being-with is shared. Dasein listens to others in this shared Being-with of discourse.

Heidegger writes about hearing, listening, and hearkening in Being and Time, but in his discussion of discourse (*Rede*), listening is not acoustic perception as in hearing, nor is it a primordial hearkening. Listening is a discursive element that involves also a Being-with (*Mitsein*) that already understands. Heidegger makes a distinction between 'hearkening' (*Hörchen*), which he deems a more primordial hearing than *hören* - "the sensing of tones and the perception of sounds" (Heidegger 1962:206-207). Nancy, however, stresses multiple meanings of listening as ways of attention and understanding. Nancy's theory of listening

⁵⁶ In Roland Barthes's 1976 essay, "Listening," written with Roland Havas, he states: "Listening cannot be defined only by its object" or goal," it includes the unconscious: the implicit, the indirect, and the supplementary (Barthes 1985:245;250;258-259).

⁵⁷ Adorno, in Aesthetic Theory (1984) and Current of Music (2009), propounds a theory of "adequate listening," or "right listening" versus "false listening" (Hullot-Kentor 2004:195-196).

as “a sonorous present,” and not a self-presence is made in the context of a logocentric tradition. According to this context, the logocentric tradition claims a distinction between speech and listening, in which speech is primary. Modern readings of the fragments of pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus are a source of this distinction, particularly in Heidegger’s analyses, which I will explore throughout this chapter. Readings of the same fragments can be found in examinations of early Stoics and their interpretation of Heraclitean *logos* (Jaspers 1966:24).

Focussing on two specific fragments, I will connect the work of Heraclitus with the theme of dialogue. Concentrating on the fragments in relation to dialogue, I will argue, dialogue requires an attending to the call of the other. Is this ‘attending to’ a form of listening? In approaching this question, I will use alternative readings of Heraclitus fragments B50 and B51, in which, I believe antiphonic dialogue is at work. Antiphony or ‘call and response’ is used in traditional African worldviews, as discussed by Charles Hersch and Geneva Smitherman. In this alternative reading of Heraclitus fragments, I will reveal a musical relation that recalls African worldviews based on harmony and community.

Bringing this in line with Chaplin’s listening, I will emphasise the peculiarly dialogic Tramp character that Chaplin created, asking how Chaplin in this character attends to the other. Stretching toward sonority and toward the opening of meaning, I say Chaplin listens to himself as other. In this way, he makes his listening listened to. In the section that follows, I will discuss the *logos* and how *logos* is related to listening.

2.1 *Logos*

The question of *logos* lies in its varied interpretations. *Logos* can mean word, truth, reason, meaning, discourse, assertion and law. Third century B.C. Stoics interpret *logos* as “all-pervading cosmic reason and fate.” Philo (c.25B.C. to A.D.50) says that *logos* is the power of reason dwelling with God. In the Gospel of St. John in the second half of the first century, and Christian theology, *logos* is personalized as the incarnate word of God (Jaspers 1966:17;24). Derrida argues metaphysics from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger has “always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos...” (Derrida 1997:3). The Western tradition of metaphysics, Derrida claims, is founded on *logos* as the spoken word. As I explained in Chapter One, Derrida maintains in Of Grammatology that logocentric thinking gives privileged status to voice (*phone*) itself in a system of “hearing (understanding)-oneself-speak (*s’entendre-parler*) through the phonic substance” (*phone*). In this system, *logos* and *phone* are indissociably linked, thereby securing absolute proximity of speech and self, of voice and being (Derrida 1997:3;7;12). In this way, the truth in *logos* is founded on the idea of full speech.

2.2.1 *Logos* and Discourse in Being and Time

Of the many meanings assigned to *logos* in Being and Time, Heidegger discusses *logos* as discourse. In Being and Time, discourse is one of three “constitutive structures.” It belongs to the structure of the *da* – or *Dasein*’s ‘there’. In the section entitled, “The Concept of the *logos*” (Heidegger 1978:55-58), he asks, “What is the real meaning of ‘discourse’” (Heidegger 1978:55)? Using the German word for discourse, *Rede*, he describes discourse as “the articulation of intelligibility” (Heidegger 1978:203-204). It is the basis of interpretation and

assertion. Discourse and interpretation articulate meaning and language as “the way in which discourse gets expressed (Heidegger 1978:204).

In Being and Time, Heidegger considers the question of the meaning of Being. He asks how beings are intelligible as beings. “Being is always the Being of an entity” and Being determines entities as entities (1962:25;29). Heidegger pursues this question of Being through his dialogue with Plato and Aristotle (Sallis/Maly 1980:x). Heidegger equates the definition of *logos* as discourse with Aristotle’s explication of the role of discourse as ‘to make manifest what one is “talking about” in one’s discourse’ (Heidegger 1978:56). What the discourse is about is what is manifested. The *logos* makes this manifest, Heidegger contends, by letting something be seen. “It lets us see something from the very thing which the discourse is about” (Heidegger 1978:56).

The *logos*, in Heidegger’s view, makes things seen via an utterance in which something is sighted. “When fully concrete, discoursing (letting something be seen) has the character of speaking...” In this way, he says *logos* is *phone* (Heidegger 1978:56). He also states in Being and Time, that discourse need not require vocal utterance. What is important is that “discourse articulates intelligibility” and the intelligibility of ‘being-in-the-world’ expresses itself as discourse (Heidegger 1978:204;316).

Parvis Emad argues *Rede*, as the essence of language, is withdrawn from speaking. It is “present in speaking or uttering and at the *same time* withdrawn from speaking and uttering” (Emad 1986:127). Discourse then, not narrowly limited to speech or words, articulates and gives structure to the intelligibility of ‘being-in-the-world’ (Carman 2003:204-206). Heidegger calls this

‘disclosedness’, meaning, “being not closed off”. *Dasein* is the disclosedness of being (Gorner 2007:71;88-89). The question of Being-with involves social interaction. It is a question of co-being or shared existence with one’s self and others.⁵⁸ Listening to one another begins when discourse is shared in this co-being, or social interaction with one’s self and others. Co-being presupposes the possibility of attending to the other.

Heidegger asserts early Greek philosophy has relied on *logos* in defining Being and gives an explanation of how *logos* came to be in a central position or *logos*-centric. The term *logos* is rooted in the word *legein*, meaning ‘to talk’ or ‘to hold discourse’. Thus, he concludes in early Greek ontology, “Being is essentially determined by the potentiality for discourse” (Heidegger 1978:47). He claims an interpretation of *logos* as reason, assertion or truth, however, has confounded the meaning of Being in Greek ontology (Heidegger 1978:208). “...The *logos* has been interpreted in a way which is ontologically inadequate...” This, he feels is a non-primordial method (Heidegger 1978:203). A *logos*-centred way of thinking, therefore, deems *logos* as the place or locus of truth. Heidegger, however, argues *logos* should be centred on discourse (*Rede*) and not on truth (Heidegger 1978:47;57). I will come back later in this chapter to Heidegger’s work on truth after Being and Time.

⁵⁸ ‘*Sobytie bytija*’, Russian for ‘Being-with’, can be translated as ‘co-being of being’. *Sobytie* normally means ‘event’ in Russian, but it breaks down etymologically into ‘co-being’ (Clark/Holquist 1984:77) (Holquist 1990:25). Bakhtin’s *Architectonics* was written in 1919 in the Soviet Union. Because of Soviet censorship, the text was not published until 1979. *Architectonics* shares similarities with Heidegger’s *Being and Time*, published eight years after *Architectonics* was written (Clark/Holquist 1984:94).

In his discussion on the phenomenon of truth as unconcealedness (*aletheia*) in Being and Time, Heidegger determinedly disagrees with the translation of *aletheia* as ‘truth’ and opts for truth in the sense of ‘uncoveredness’ or ‘unhiddenness’ instead. The translation of *aletheia* as truth, he argues, covers up “the meaning of what the Greeks made ‘self-evidently’ basic for the terminological use of [*aletheia*] as a pre-philosophical way of understanding it” (Heidegger 1978:262). Heidegger refers to the fragments of Heraclitus here as “the oldest fragments of philosophical doctrine in which the [*logos*] is *explicitly* handled” (Heidegger 1978:262). Heidegger appropriates Heraclitus fragments in this section of Being and Time in order to support his notion of truth as uncoveredness or unhiddenness and *logos* as belonging to this unhiddenness. “In proposing our ‘definition’ of ‘truth’ we have not *shaken off* the tradition, but we have *appropriated* it primordially...” (Heidegger 1978:262).

As a means of examining *logos*, I will discuss Heraclitus, whose Fragment B50 is an early reference to *logos*.

2.1.2 *Logos* in Heraclitus Fragment B50

Heraclitus lived during the fifth century B.C. in Ephesus in Ionia on Asia Minor. The only biography on Heraclitus was written by Diogenes Laertius in the third century A.D. (Sallis/Maly 1980:viii). According to this biography, Heraclitus wrote a book entitled, On Nature. No book, however, remains. T. M. Robinson explains Heraclitus’ works vary from direct quotations to personal accounts reconstructed from memory (Robinson 1991:6). Originally, the work of Heraclitus may have been spoken and then written down at a later time. What we have are fragments of his work that are removed from their original context.

Their context, Sallis and Maly argue, may have been “a further written discourse...a further spoken discourse, or merely a situation in which the saying was uttered” (Sallis/Maly 1980:viii). Classical scholar G. S. Kirk observes Heraclitus fragments do not appear to be extracted from a written work, but as “oral pronouncements put into...an easily memorable form” (Kirk 1957:185). “It is possible,” says Kirk, “that Heraclitus wrote no book, in our sense of the word” (Kirk 1962:7).

A fragment, like a proverb, is a quotation of an author’s spoken words. Like African proverbs, which form part of an oral literature, rooted in the proverbs, folksongs, folktales, art, and rituals (Gyekye 1987:13), fragments are transmitted by word of mouth, and not by the written word. Sources of the fragments are found in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Cratylus and Theophrastus. Later, authors such as the Stoics, Christian writers and neoplatonists were dependent upon the earlier sources. These later authors include Sextus Empiricus, Marcus Aurelius, Plutarch, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Diogenes Laertius, Plotinus, Porphyry and Proclus (Robinson 1991:6) (Sallis/Maly 1980:viii).

This investigation will begin with several interpretations of the same short piece of text – what is known as Heraclitus’ Fragment B50 (Sallis/Maly 1980:9):

**οὐκ ἔμοῦ, ἀλλὰ τοῦ λόγου ἀκούσαντας ὁμολογεῖν σοφὸν ἔστιν ἐν
πάντα εἶναι**

This sentence is attributed to Heraclitus in texts authored by Clement of Alexandria and Aristotle. I will explore Fragment B50 and how this work has been interpreted. Here is the same fragment as interpreted by Kirk (Kirk 1962:65):

Listening not to me but to the Logos it is wise to agree...that all things
are one

Robinson's version is as follows (Robinson 1991:36-37):

Not after listening to me, but after listening to the account, one does
wisely in agreeing (*homologeîn*) that all things are (in fact) one (thing),
[says Heraclitus]

John Burnet interprets Fragment B50 as (Burnet 1920:132):

It is wise to hearken, not to me, but to my Word, and to confess that all
things are one.

Interpretations of *logos* as word or account differ from readings of Heraclitus
Fragment B50 such as Heidegger's in his later work on Heraclitus (Heidegger
1975) (Heidegger/Fink 1966/67).

2.2 Heidegger's Interpretations of Fragment B50

Heidegger bases his translations of Heraclitus on the Greek texts provided by
Hermann Diels and Walther Kranz.⁵⁹ These English versions are English
translations of Heidegger's German versions of Diels and Kranz, and not English
versions of the Greek fragments (Sallis/Maly 1980:3). According to Sallis and
Maly, in Heidegger's translations of Herclitean fragments, his philosophical

59 Diels, Hermann, and Kranz, Walther. 1954. Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker, Berlin: Weidmann.

approach to translation entails “the demand that our thinking first be translated to the matter at issue in that fragment” (Sallis/Maly 1980:3). Thus, his translations are less philological and more rooted in a dialogue between Heidegger and “a thoughtful experience of the tradition” (Sallis/Maly 1980:3).

In the 1967 Heraclitus Seminar, Heidegger and Eugene Fink provide three interpretations of Fragment B50 (Sallis/Maly 1980:9-10):

If you have heard not me but rather the λόγος, then it is wise to say accordingly, ‘all is one’.

Attuned not to me but to the laying that gathers, letting the same lie: the fateful occurs (the laying that gathers): one unifying all.

When you have listened, not merely to me (the speaker), but rather when you maintain yourselves in hearkening attunement, then there is proper hearing.⁶¹

Given Heidegger’s discussion of hearkening in Being and Time, the phrase, ‘hearkening attunement’, which he and Fink use in their reading of Heraclitus could refer to a type of harmony in discourse, in which listening and speaking are

⁶¹ With Heidegger and Fink’s commentary, this version reads (Sallis/Maly 1980:10):

Do not listen to me, the mortal speaker, but be in hearkening to the laying that gathers; first belong to this and then you hear properly; such hearing is when a letting-lie-together-before occurs before which the gathering letting-lie, the laying that gathers, lies as gathered; when a letting-lie of the letting-lie, the laying that gathers, lies as gathered; when a letting-lie of the letting-lie-before occurs, the fateful comes to pass; then the truly fateful, i.e., destiny alone, is: the unique one unifying all.

in some kind of agreement. The priority Heidegger gives to hearkening and understanding in Being and Time in 1927, however, seems to be firmly displaced by the account of language and listening that unfolds in his later writing. I will discuss how the treatment of listening in Being and Time can or cannot be compared with Heidegger's later work on language.

2.2.1. Time and Being

Heidegger's reading of Fragment B50 tends to neglect the idea of discourse, as he is not apt to dwell on the topic of discourse in his later writings after Being and Time.

In Heidegger's unpublished section of Being and Time, originally titled, "Time and Being," everything in Being and Time is reversed. Heidegger thought of this part as a reversal of what would have come before it. Subsequently, Heidegger's philosophy shifts in his work after Being and Time. This change between Being and Time and his work after 1930 is known as *die Kehre*, which means, 'the reversal' or 'the turn'. Heidegger links the turn to his own failure to produce the missing divisions of Being and Time (Wheeler 2011).

As Michael Wheeler explains, in his later writing, Heidegger reformulates the question of Being. This later work does not question the meaning of Being from *Dasein*'s perspective. It rather asks how Being unfolds, questioning the meaning of Being from Being's perspective (Wheeler 2011). "What the later thinking involves is a reorientation of the basic project so that...the point of departure is no longer a detailed description of ordinary human experience" as it is in Being and Time (Wheeler 2011).

Sallis explains in his 1986 essay, “Where Does *Being and Time* Begin?” (Sallis 1986:98-118;118a), “Heidegger’s thought does not move away from *Being and Time* but rather back to its beginning – in order to attempt a more originary beginning” (Sallis 2006:23). Sallis translates a 1964 lecture, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” in which Heidegger is speaking about his aim to “submit the beginning of the question in *Being and Time* to an immanent critique” (Sallis 2006:23). In Sallis’ reading, Heidegger writes of his attempts since 1930, “to give the questioning in *Being and Time* a more originary...form.” (Sallis 2006:23).

2.2.2 Language and reversal

In his earlier work, Heidegger gives more importance to discourse than to language. In *Being and Time*, discourse is prior to language. Understanding and meaning precede and are concealed within language. Sallis puts forward a possible explanation in an essay entitled, “Language and Reversal,” (Sallis 1992:196-199). Sallis argues Heidegger’s lack of focus on discourse in his later works indicates a change in his approach to language that is manifested in his later writings.⁶² According to Sallis, “In the later writings what was called ‘discourse’ (*Rede*) in *Being and Time* “comes to be regarded as the primary sense of ‘language’ (*sprache*) (Sallis 1992:207). In *Being and Time*, discourse is a constituent of *Dasein*’s *da*, whereas in the later work, language becomes a constituent of the *da*.

⁶² Another possible reason is that Heidegger favours Aristotle’s interpretation of Heraclitus (Gadamer 1994:143-144).

In the reversal, says Sallis, language becomes a more primordial appropriation of the three forms of constitution: discourse, understanding and disposition. In *Being and Time*, language is the means for expression of discourse, which is ‘the articulation of intelligibility’. In Being and Time, intelligibility is articulated from its concealment in language. There is something already expressed in discourse prior to language’s expressing of it, and thus discourse is a prior articulation of meaning that is concealed in language. In the reversal, language is revealed as more originary than it is in Being and Time. It is “the language of being” (Heidegger 1998:276).

Emad writes that Heidegger’s interpretation of Heraclitus fragments in section two of Heraklit is founded on his views on language. Heidegger uses the German *Sage* (legend or myth) to mean ‘saying’. *Sage* in Heidegger’s later work is the essence of language. Essence here is based on *Wesen*, which is enduring, lasting or coming to presence (Emad 1986:124-126). In *Sage*, language comes to presence. For Heidegger, *Sage* is originary saying and showing. In Being and Time, the essence of language is *Rede*, “present in speaking or uttering and at the *same time* withdrawn from speaking and uttering” (Emad 1986:127). The reversal, Emad explains, is not a split or dichotomy in Heidegger’s thinking. A clear split would imply that Dasein is cut off from being. The reversal rather marks a change in Heidegger’s structure of inquiry (Emad 1986:128-129). “It is an error to assume that there are two periods in Heidegger’s thinking, one in which he focuses more on Dasein and another in which he concentrates more on being” (Emad 1986:129). Being disclosed as Dasein is “a disclosure *from within* the disclosure of beings such” (Emad 1986:128-129). Emad sees a progression in Heidegger’s work from Heraklit, in which he discusses the essence of language

and “closely anticipates the later account of language” that emerges in Heidegger’s 1959 lecture, On the Way to Language (Emad 1986:134) (Heidegger 1971:111-136).

Language is being in “The Way to Language,” in which language, belonging to what is present, is represented in speech (Heidegger 1971:115). Heidegger connects speaking and saying with being, “*The essential being of language is Saying as Showing*” (Heidegger 1971:123). To say is to show, to let appear, be seen and heard. Speaking represents the presence of language. He discusses the simultaneousness of speaking and listening. Yet there is something that is “prior to the becoming present of saying or speaking” (Heidegger 1971:122-123). The unspoken remains unsaid. The unspoken, unsaid is concealed and unshowable. Speaking listens to the unspoken or what is said. Language speaks by saying. Saying as showing causes what is present to appear and what is absent to no longer appear (Heidegger 1971:122;126;131).

In order to understand how Heidegger regards *Sage*, Emad believes, it is important to examine Heidegger’s reference to the fragments of Heraclitus as the silent word. “We must consider the issue of the turning if we wish to understand how, on his way to determining the essence of language as *Sage*, Heidegger refers to the Heraclitus fragments as the silent word which is to be distinguished from the sounding of words” (Emad 1986:128). According to Emad, Heidegger does not consider Heraclitus fragments as rooted in spoken language. In Being and Time, *Rede* as an element in speaking not exhausted by actively speaking is unfolded as *Sage*. In this way, in order to understand how *Sage* is the essence of language in the later Heidegger work, we should consider that he discusses *Sage*

in Heraklit as the silence and stillness of the essence of language (Emad 1986:133).

In another one of Heidegger's later essays entitled, "Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B50)," which appears in 1975 in Early Greek Thinking: The Dawn of Western Philosophy, (Heidegger 1984:59-78), Heidegger begins his own reading of the fragment by advising us to take a step back from the fragments and to first consider how to define the terms *logos* and *legein*. He cites Bruno Snell's interpretation as follows (Heidegger 1984:59):⁶³

When you have listened not to me but to the Meaning, it is wise within the same Meaning to say: One is All.

In order to understand an emergence of the one in Heraclitus Fragment B50, an interpretation must start with *logos*. After resolving the issue of *logos*, then the all can be understood (Heidegger 1984:60):

We will get closer to these riddles if we step back before them. That done, it becomes clear that in order to observe the riddle as a riddle we must clarify before all else what λόγος and λέγειν mean.

In a chapter entitled, "The Limitation of Being" in An Introduction to Metaphysics. Heidegger describes a "kinship" between apprehension (*nous*) and *logos*, in which apprehension means what is gathered or what shows itself and *logos* means "the gathering that makes manifest" (Heidegger 1959:93-206). This

⁶³ Snell, Bruno. 1926. "Die Sprache Heraklits," Hermes. Vol. 61, No. 4, pp 353-381.

definition of *logos* differs from the use of *logos* as ‘assertion’ or that which “reveals or shows forth” in the later Greek thinking of Aristotle and Plato (Inwood 1999:21), but both meanings allude to what has been understood and made clear. *Logos* has an affinity to *legein*, to speak or to say, whose original meaning is, “to disclose and make manifest.” Thus, *legein* communicates something; the *logos* carries the meaning of this communication; and apprehension is collected. Heidegger adduces to a double meaning of apprehension or *vernehmen* that means, “a receptive attitude” that makes meaning understood. To apprehend (*vernehmen*) or *noein* is “to let something come to one, not merely accepting it, however, but “taking a receptive attitude” “toward that which shows itself.”⁶⁴

The phrase, ‘to let something come to one’ appears in Heidegger’s interpretation of Heraclitus where it means to understand something in the mutual interaction of discourse. This notion of a receptive attitude that understands what shows itself could be a forerunner to Nancy’s listening (*l’écoute*), which tends toward the opening, revealing or disclosure of meaning. Considering Heidegger’s discussion of apprehension as “a receptive attitude,” which involves understanding something, could discourse be a mutual ‘attending to’ that presupposes listening?

The reversal in Heidegger also pertains to listening, which belongs to discourse

⁶⁴ While to apprehend (*vernehmen*) or *noein* is to accept, to let something come to one, it is also defined as to hear, to perceive, to understand, to learn, to interrogate, and it means “to hear a witness, to question him and so determine the facts, to establish how a master stands” (Heidegger 1959:138).

in Being and Time, but later in “The Way to Language,” he calls speaking a listening to language (Heidegger 1971:123). In Early Greek Thinking, hearkening or listening is the revealing of what is heard. “What is heard comes to presence in hearkening” (Heidegger 1984:65). In Being and Time’s discourse, listening is an attending to others. Self and other are in co-being. Heidegger, in “The Way to Language,” ventures to say that listening even *precedes* speech (1971:123):

It is the custom to put speaking and listening in opposition: one man speaks, the other listens. The simultaneousness of speaking and listening has a larger meaning. Speaking is of itself a listening. Speaking is listening to the language we speak. Thus, it is a listening not *while* but *before* we are speaking.

The claim that “speaking is listening” subverts a logocentric notion that listening must increase in order for the demands of speech to be met and understood. Heidegger states this in the reverse in Being and Time by suggesting that understanding is prerequisite to listening. “Only he who already understands can listen” (Heidegger 1962:208). Taking Being and Time together with “The Way to Language,” understanding precedes listening, which in turn, precedes speaking. For Heidegger, listening (*zuhoren*) always already understands.

2.3 A Peculiarly Dialogical Figure

I will give an alternative reading of Heraclitean fragments B50 and B51 that supports an interpretation of *logos* as discourse or dialogue, revealing an

attending to and an answering. I propose the dialogue implicit in fragments B50 and B51 entails communication among differences, in which the word of the other mutually acts upon one's own word,⁶⁸ thereby undermining the notion of self-present meaning in the *logos*. This is because perfectly self-present meaning depends on absolute proximity in space and time. I argue in this chapter, that dialogue, mutual interaction of speaker and listener, by way of attending to and answering each other, makes immediate presence impossible because the utterance is not simultaneous in speaker and listener. In this way, they share temporal or spatial difference, which creates openness.

As a means of examining this openness, I will first consider the peculiarly dialogical figure derived from Chaplin. This figure communicates meaning without using speech, and thereby relies on nonverbal communication. Though 'silent', early films used scripts, which gave spoken dialogue lines for actors to perform. Early film narratives from 1895 to 1929 took place "in a hearing world" (Raynauld 2001:69) (Raynauld 2010:578). Chaplin distinctively invokes listening using unspoken dialogue conveyed solely through his movements and expressions. In Chaplin's early works, the Tramp uses no speech, and yet he can hold a dialogue with a broad range of things, each of which can potentially become an interlocutor. This includes not only the audience and himself, but also objects, characters and props.

⁶⁸ Augusto Ponzio, in The Routledge companion to Semiotics (Cobley 2010), defines dialogue as "External or internal discourse in which the word of the other, not necessarily in the second person, interferes with one's own word" (Cobley 2010:206).

Chaplin's dialogue with himself is not to be mistaken for a dialogue with his 'it/id', detached from all else. As Alenka Zupančič discusses, 'dialogical monologue' can occur when "the characters, technically in dialogue with others, are in fact absorbed in a dialogue with themselves, or with their 'it'." In the world of the play, characters perform in monologue, while their dialogue with their 'it/id' continues (Zupančič 2008:69).⁷⁰ Chaplin, however, is engaged in dialogue with both the world of the film and with the audience.

Walter Kerr comments on Chaplin's tendency in his earliest films such as *Kid Auto Races at Venice* (Sennett 1914), to communicate directly with the audience, while seeming to forget about his fellow screen characters. He did this by skilfully confiding in the audience (Kerr 1975:77) via nonverbal dialogue and by using various elements of the mise-en-scène, such as his own costume. Many have written about Chaplin's costume, its origin and its role in the development of the Tramp character. What Kerr and others do not observe is how Chaplin performs a dialogue with the costume itself. As Kerr demonstrates, Chaplin utilizes elements of the costume, such as the iconic bowler hat to confide in the audience.

Kerr also observes how Chaplin takes an attitude toward objects that determines their identity. This is exemplified in the clock scene in *The Pawnshop* (1916), in which Chaplin gives a number of identities to a simple alarm clock (Kerr

⁷⁰ See Zupančič's Lacanian analysis of comedy in Molière. Characters with "passionate attachment to an 'it/id' are detached from all else. Such characters are never intersubjective, but are in dialogue with their 'it/id' (Zupančič 2008:68-69).

1975:92). His attitude toward objects is to instil in them an identity or voice from his own imagination, creating a connection working in both directions between his self and the other. Attending to and answering not the object itself, but the voices of objects. This constitutes the dialogue that is essential to Chaplin's unique comedy. Chaplin biographer, David Robinson describes this dialogic comedy, "When Chaplin bumped into a tree...it was not the collision that was funny, but the fact that he raised his hat to the tree in a reflexive gesture of apology" (Robinson 1985:113). This creates a connection with the tree, but more importantly, Chaplin communicates something special to the audience with the gesture of raising his hat to the tree. In this way, he confides in the audience, using his costume, as Kerr tells us (Kerr 1975:77), but what he entrusts to the audience is nothing less than the Tramp's own dignity. The Tramp's costume is evidence of his dignity. Arnheim describes how Chaplin's Tramp costume is not simply ragged, but it is ragged in a way that is related to wealth. "His jaunty bowler hat, his coat vaguely resembling a dinner jacket, his dandified little stick and mustache describe poverty as the lack of riches" (Arnheim 1957:145). In order to illustrate how Chaplin entrusts the Tramp's dignity in the audience, I will elaborate on one of Chaplin's favourite themes involving a hat.

One of Chaplin's recurring motifs is a man scrambling to catch hold of his hat or miming the expression, "Where's my hat?" His early films tend to feature scenes with several shots of the Tramp losing and regaining his hat in this manner. Chaplin explains the ill-fitting hat as "a striving for dignity" (Geduld 1987:16). In his 1918 article, "What People Laugh At," Chaplin claims his films are built "around the idea of getting me into trouble and so giving me the chance to be desperately serious in my attempt to appear as a normal little gentlemen" -

clutching his cane, straightening his derby hat, fixing his tie (Chaplin 1918:134-137). He spends a good part of every film conversing with his hat, often in disagreement where the hat rarely has the last word. Always a size too small, the hat perpetually falls off of his head, but this happens for reasons other than its small size. When Chaplin manipulates his hat, he injects the hat with a voice, thus animating it. Animating the hat makes it a means of expressing a voice - his voice, but as other. He engages the audience and this voice in a dialogue. Therefore a dialogue ensues among the Tramp, the audience and the now animated hat.

This is not to say that the distinctive hats worn by Chaplin's contemporaries, such as Keaton, Lloyd, and Linder, were inanimate. The hat is a featured costume prop in most slapstick comedies. In *The Butcher Boy* (Arbuckle 1917) for instance, when Fatty Arbuckle sticks Buster Keaton with a hatful of treacle, Keaton tries to return the filled hat to his head, which leads to more sticky antics. *The Butcher Boy* is a film imbued with action, gags, acrobatics, violence and flying objects. Hardly any element of the action in *The Butcher Boy* can be described as 'inanimate'. This has to do with the way an object is used or employed. An object such as Keaton's hat, which is used by Arbuckle and by Keaton, is an object used for physical manipulation (Gorner 2007:38). Chaplin's hat is 'ready-to-hand' (Heidegger 1978:98-99) in that it is available for Chaplin to manipulate for the purpose of covering his head. However, Chaplin appropriates his hat's 'readiness-to-hand' for a different purpose. In an example of this, he carries out a discourse composed of the covering and uncovering of

his head. Chaplin describes one of the first of his appearances in a film for Mack Sennett's Keystone Film Company,⁷¹ in which the Tramp crashes a wedding party.⁷² "...I was a tramp just wanting a little shelter. I entered and stumbled over the foot of a lady. I turned and raised my hat apologetically, then turned and stumbled over a cuspidor, then turned and raised my hat to the cuspidor" (Chaplin 2003:146). Keaton and Arbuckle appropriate Keaton's signature porkpie hat in order to perform the gag of getting the treacle in all the wrong places and making Keaton's foot impossibly stuck to the floor in the process. Chaplin uses the hat discourse with the cuspidor and the lady to humanise the Tramp and to create a gag out of his striving for dignity despite his undignified situation.

The ongoing dialogue Chaplin engages in is like the bow and lyre in Heraclitean fragment B51. "They do not comprehend how, in differing, it agrees with itself – a back-turning harmony, like that of a bow and a lyre." The bow goes back and forth across the lyre in two-way communication with itself, the lyre, and with their resonance. Chaplin, with each silent movement, gesture, posture and facial expression, stretches toward sonority, returning a voice that has nothing to do

⁷¹ Sennett, a former Biograph player and comedy director co-founded Keystone in 1912 and became its principal director. From 1912 to 1917, Sennett released one Keystone film per week, with his unique line of slapstick comedy. Keystone films challenged social conventions and institutions. "Law and order were made a special target with the advent of the frantically incompetent Keystone Cops" (Stewart 1996:67). Chaplin developed his Tramp character when he joined Keystone in 1914 and within one year, starred in 35 comedies (Stewart 1996:67).

⁷² Chaplin started his film career at Keystone in 1914, acting and soon directing one reel and two reel comedies. The Keystone formula emphasised fast paced, short narratives, and physical action. Characters were generally undeveloped and based on character stereotypes (Flom 1997:36).

with speech or sound, but is inclined toward the opening of meaning. Advancing the argument that listening is inherently dialogic, I argue Chaplin listens to himself-as-other, and by transmitting this in his films, makes his listening listened to (Szendy 2008:5). As I discussed in Chapter One, Nancy discusses this reflexivity in Szendy's *Listen: A History of Our Ears* (2008), in which a sonorous body 'makes itself heard' (*se fait entendre*) and 'listens to itself' (*s'écoute*) (Szendy 2008:x). For Szendy, listening is a question of making "a listening listened to" (Szendy 2008:5).

As a result of Chaplin's listening to himself as other, the Tramp character is present to his self neither temporally nor spatially. This is because the voice of the other is already shared within the Tramp's own voice. This presence of the other means the Tramp's voice is not in absolute proximity to Chaplin or to the other. Chaplin listens not as a hearing-oneself-speak form of auto-affection, but, recalling Derrida's hetero-affection that I discussed in Chapter One, his listening-to-himself involves de-centring differences. This is because speaker and hearer are different, and not immediately self-present. Chaplin, through referring to himself as other, is both subject and other. He and audience are not the same. With this difference, immediate self-presence is inhibited both as a spatial presence and as a temporal one.

2.4 The Comic Possibilities in Being Human

2.4.1 Chaplin's Hat Dialogue

To execute this dialogue, Chaplin uses the hat. He employs the hat in order to engage in a dialogue with the audience. This differentiates Chaplin's hat from other hats in cinema. Many early films featured the hat prominently, such as D.W. Griffith's 1909 three-minute film, *Those Awful Hats*. In this film, the gag comprises ladies hats. The comedy revolves around the hats and the effect they have on the characters. The action takes place inside a cinema where people are enjoying a film, when several women enter wearing excessively large hats adorned with flowers. The hat women cause a commotion when they take their seats because their hats obstruct the other patrons' view of the screen. A huge mechanical scoop lowers from the ceiling and lifts one of the offending hats off of its owner's head. This persuades the women to remove their hats to avoid having them scooped up as well. However, one woman with an enormous feather hat refuses to remove hers. The scoop returns and absconds with both the woman and her hat, lifting her from her seat and out of the frame. At the end, a title card announces: 'Ladies will please remove their hats'.⁸⁰ In Chaplin's films, no matter how dishevelled and decrepit the Tramp's hat may be the other characters seem unperturbed by it. The Tramp would likely be removed from the cinema for disturbing the patrons, but, in his persistent attempt to maintain his dignity and his gentlemanly manner, he would be obliging in removing his hat. Griffith's hats do not express the voice of the other as Chaplin does with his hat. Chaplin,

⁸⁰ "Made as a humorous substitute for the usual slide asking ladies to doff their extravagant hats when inside the nickelodeon" (Stewart 1996:19).

through the striving for dignity in his hat dialogue with the audience, expresses what is his voice, while at the same time, the voice of the other.

In *The New York Hat* (Griffith 1912), starring Mary Pickford and Lionel Barrymore, Mary is a girl whose mother falls ill and dies, leaving Mary with a mean, penny-pinching father to raise her. The mother secretly left a letter and her savings in the hands of the local minister to give to her daughter so that she may enjoy some of the finer things in life that her miserly husband has always denied them. The minister, sworn to secrecy, happens upon Mary one day admiring a fancy hat in a shop window. He dutifully buys the hat and presents it to the girl who is overjoyed to receive it. His gift causes a scandal though, and townspeople speculate as to the real relationship between Mary and the minister. When her father hears of this, he is mortified and destroys the hat, tearing it to pieces. Unlike Mary, the Tramp would have tried his utmost to use his old hat in a dignified way rather than coveting a new one in a shop window. This point is epitomized in *City Lights*, when the Tramp apologetically tips his tattered, old hat to the blind flower girl the moment he realizes she cannot see, although she believes him to be a wealthy gentleman with a limousine. Again, Griffith's hat is defeated and does not express a striving for dignity. Chaplin makes the Tramp retrieve his hat each time it goes astray in a constant attempt to maintain dignity. Chaplin's hat is the means by which he refers to himself as other, thus humanising the Tramp.

One archival film clip from the early silent era that illustrates a similar image to the Tramp's striving to preserve dignity, seen in many documentary films shows

footage of the New York Flatiron building in 1903.⁸¹ In this slice of New York life where Fifth Avenue and Broadway intersect 23rd street, the pedestrians walking by the camera all hold onto their hats, as the downdrafts from the building caused continuous winds to blow the hats and skirts of passersby. One man who walks into the frame is so mesmerised by the presence of the camera, that he forgets to grab hold of his hat and the wind carries it away. Startled and embarrassed, the man runs out of the frame after his hat. Chaplin explains it is human nature to find humour in seeing people in an undignified and embarrassing situation attempt to maintain dignity (Chaplin 1918:134-137). A young Chaplin in 1903 might have seen the Flatiron film in a newsreel, as he was, at fourteen, already a paid working actor and could afford the cinema. He learned early on to draw inspiration from the comedy he observed in everyday life. “It has paid me to be always alive to the comic possibilities of the people and the things I see in everyday life” (Chaplin 1918:134-137). This awareness of human nature developed during his early years acting on the stage and in films and would become evident in his later comedies. In 1916, Chaplin told Moving Picture World how most of his acting is drawn from people he observes in real life (Wiltermood 1916):

My leaden-foot walk...typifies the sore feet of an almost penniless upstart trying to pose as an aristocratic swell, while my attempted smug complacency under the most adverse rebuffs characterizes concurrently

⁸¹ *At the Foot of the Flatiron*, 1903. In: 2007. ‘The Life of a City: Early Films of New York from the Paper Print Collection’, 1898-1906 Video. USA: Library of Congress.

that usual human trait that is seen everywhere, in a stranded race track tout or bootblack, to try to appear clever and superior to moneyless surroundings.

Why does Chaplin see infinite comic possibilities in this penniless imposter trying to overcome his desperate situation? His method for connecting with the audience through movement and gestures depends on the Tramp's humanity and resolute dignity in a myriad of undignified situations. Film critic, Roger Manvell, in reviewing the 1948 dark comedy, *Monsieur Verdoux*, describes Chaplin's genius as "an unusually deep-rooted concern for being human, combined with an overwhelming need to express that concern" (Manvell 1948:77). Although the serial killer, Verdoux, who marries and murders rich women displays a disregard for human life and a lack of compassion, Manvell observes, Chaplin humanizes Verdoux rather than portray him as a monster. For film critic André Bazin, the audience sympathises with Verdoux not on a moral level, but "we take him as he is." This is to say, the audience sympathises with the character, and not with his actions. Bazin likens Verdoux in the final scene of the film to the Tramp. Sentenced to death for murders he has committed, Verdoux is led to the guillotine with his hands tied behind his back, making him adopt a funny walk that strongly resembles the Tramp. This final unspoken gag is a momentary return to the silent Chaplin. The gag, Bazin believes, reveals to the audience that Verdoux could be a manifestation of the Tramp. It could be "the gag that resolves the whole film," Bazin suggests. If Verdoux were the Tramp in a brilliant disguise all along, then what follows this scene is the Tramp's execution (Bazin 2005:102;109;112;123). How does Chaplin convey so much information about a character in only a few footsteps?

This works through Chaplin's unmistakable gait style, the Tramp walk, which is more of a speech-act⁸² in itself than a series of kinesic movements.⁸³ Chaplin makes his feet listened to by way of their discourse with each other, with Chaplin himself, and with the audience. Chaplin's walk is a running dialogue between his left foot and his right foot. One foot goes down, the other listens and responds. When he turns a corner, running, one foot goes up and the other hops as he skids across the floor. His movements do not replace or support dialogue; his movements are utterances in the dialogue that connect him with the audience. Whether with the Tramp walk or with his hat, Chaplin refers back to himself as other. In this dialogue, he makes himself listened to. He listens to himself as other and resounds. I will explain this resonance in the next chapter in a discussion of Nancy's theory of resonance.

2.4.2 Morin's Paradox

This discussion of understanding and the mutual interaction of discourse lead me to a paradox that Morin identifies. Morin's approach to mutual understanding necessitates an awareness of human complexity. In his work for UNESCO, Morin develops his idea that literature, theatre and cinema can foster this awareness. For Morin, literature, poetry and cinema are like "schools" of human understanding because they show us the complexity of human relationships

⁸² Speech-acts in J.L. Austin's "acts of speech" are the situation in which the utterance is uttered (Austin 1975:20;52).

⁸³ Kinesics, according to Fernando Poyatos, refers to gestures, manners and postures. This includes gaze movements, hand movements, breathing, stride, gait styles, and even more subtle movements known as microkinesics (Poyatos 2002:185-186;225).

(1998:4-5). In the cinema, spectators are “rarely alienated by what they see on the screen. In fact they become much more understanding than in real life” (Morin 2006:30). People who are ordinarily looked down on are understood. “The paradox is that we are often more understanding when we read a novel or see a film than we are in real life” (Morin 2006:30-31). Films, in particular, “draw on the fullness of our subjectivity, bringing us to understand and sympathize with people who in ordinary circumstances would be foreign or revolting” (Morin 1999:53).

In order to investigate this presupposition, I will now turn to Morin’s brief, yet relevant remarks on Chaplin. Morin supports his thesis with an example from cinema – that of seeing a tramp in the street versus seeing Charlie Chaplin as the Tramp on the cinema screen. “*Celui qui a repugnance pour le vagabond rencontré dans la rue sympathise de tout son Coeur, au cinema, avec le vagabond Charlot*” (Morin 1999b:56).⁸⁴ In this statement, Morin draws on themes of sympathy, ethics, cinema versus reality, and the Tramp’s role in society. Morin presents a type of understanding that involves intersubjectivity and openness to others as other subjects (Morin 1999:50;53). The Tramp explains what it feels like to be a tramp and why he does what he does. In invoking this screen character, Morin contends that human understanding requires empathy, identification and projection, and through this type of

⁸⁴ Morin, in the original French, uses *Charlot*. *Charlot* is the French term for Charlie Chaplin. *Le Petit Robert* defines *Charlot* as, *diminutif de Charles, nom du personnage comique créé par Charlie Chaplin*. The common noun, *charlot*, means clown.

understanding, “someone who is disgusted by a tramp he sees in the street will open his heart to the movie tramp, Charlie Chaplin.”

Morin implies that all film characters have the potential to exchange everyday indifference toward the suffering of others for sympathy and compassion in the cinema. Is Chaplin merely one of many actors who hew to Morin’s observations? How does Chaplin draw out sympathy, demanding that his audience not deride, or deplore, or detest, but listen to the Tramp?⁸⁵

Chaplin exploits an awareness of human complexity that Morin speaks about. Pathos, with its affective influence on an audience can undermine the audience’s ability to reason or reflect critically. Bakhtin points out that empathy in drama threatens alterity in that empathy destroys the self/other distinction (Cunliffe 1993:59;62). Chaplin’s films, however, are no illusionist drama.⁸⁶ By blending pathos and comedy, he prolongs the gap between himself and the audience, and inspires reflection on the part of the audience. Lawrence Mintz writes, “Chaplin’s comedy exposes us as it makes it easier for us to accept our reality; his pathos demands that we respond sympathetically” (Mintz 1991:100). It is by

⁸⁵ Recalling Spinoza: “...I have taken great care to understand human actions, and not to deride, deplore, or denounce them. I have therefore regarded human passions like love, hate, anger, envy, pride, pity, and the other feelings that agitate the mind, not as vices of human nature, but as properties which belong to it in the same way as heat, cold, storm, thunder and the like belong to the nature of the atmosphere” (Spinoza/Wernham 1958:263). in: de Spinoza, B., 1958. *The political works the Theologico-Politicus, Tractatus Politicus in full*, edited and translated by A.G. Wernham. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

⁸⁶ As opposed to Bertolt Brecht’s epic theatre that uses alienation techniques. Brecht saw the theatre of the 1920s and 30s as illusionist because a ‘suspension of disbelief’ made the audience prone to ‘escapism’. In his ‘epic theatre’, he challenges the audience by creating distance between audience and characters.

no accident that Morin cites the Tramp as an example of how an awareness of human complexity fosters mutual understanding. The Tramp is a paragon of listening. By imbuing the screen with dialogue and through listening to himself-as-other, Chaplin makes his listening listened to.

Morin's discussion of Chaplin regarding his theory of human complexity and understanding illustrates openness in Chaplin's work. This openness makes possible his attending to and answering the other by way of extending temporally and stretching out spatially. Openness to the other will be important when I explain how a relation to self that is not a self-presence is integral to Nancean listening. This relation is a referral to a space of a self that is itself as other, and not presence to self.

2.4.3 Concrete Irrationality

Chaplin explores the possibilities for dialogue with the audience and with objects. He uses his dialogue with the audience to humanise the Tramp as he refers to himself as other in the Tramp's effort to regain dignity. Chaplin does not relate to objects, but to himself as other through the dialogue that connects himself with objects. In this section, I will compare and contrast Chaplin's method with Buster Keaton and his style of comedy and transformative use of objects. I will argue that Chaplin's work with objects is more of a dialogue than the sentimentality that Keaton proponents use to contrast the two performers.

While Buster Keaton is an exceptionally dextrous actor who takes bold risks in performing all of his own stunts, attention focuses on his character's overcoming of obstacles or making an escape, and not on his gait. Keaton's footwork is remarkable in silent films such as *Cops* (Keaton/Cline 1922), in which his

character manages to outrun dozens of policemen with great velocity and intensity. Though Keaton's gait style and body movements reflect precision and technical skill, his communication style is more a restrained questioning than Chaplin's striving for dignity. Spanish surrealists in the 1920s, admirers of slapstick comedy in general, preferred Keaton to Chaplin for Keaton's stoicism and lack of sentimentality (Bohn 2005:126).⁸⁷ Robert Knopf describes Keaton as a comedian who "questions the logic of the world," challenging "logic, reason and causality" (Knopf 1999:17;112). Keaton tends to challenge large issues such as gravity, while seesawing on a ladder three stories above the street in *Cops* or weather, as he stands leaning against gale-force winds in *Steamboat Bill Jr.* (Riesener 1928). Keaton, a comedian with a deadpan, serious face – "...I've got a blank pan" (Keaton 1920)⁸⁸ – questions the impossible situations he finds himself in. *Why gravity*, he asks. *Why a cyclone? Why a speeding locomotive?* While Keaton questions the logic of things, Chaplin exchanges polite banter with animate and inanimate objects. Yet, if Keaton were to pause for a moment to adjust his own hat, he would risk letting the logic, reason and causality of things get the better of him.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Especially Federico Garcia Lorca, who wrote a play, 'El paseo de Buster Keaton' or 'Buster Keaton Goes for a Ride' in 1925, and published in 1928 in *Gallo* (Bohn 2005:126-127).

⁸⁸ Kingsley, Grace, 1920. "Buster Bursts Into Stardom," In: *Los Angeles Times*, May 16, 1920. <http://www.public.asu.edu/~bruce/Taylor68.txt>

⁸⁹ Not until the 1930s, would the talkies become a force that even Keaton could not stare down. Keaton had huge success as an actor and director in the 1910s and 1920s, but once talkies were instilled, he, like many others, lost his position in Hollywood. Keaton's downfall came when he signed a contract with MGM, which severely limited his creative freedom and drove him to alcohol abuse.

Salvador Dalí refers to Keaton's use of objects in his slapstick as 'concrete irrationality' (Knopf 1999:112). Keaton takes objects from everyday reality and transforms their inherent features and functions. By using a clip-on tie as a moustache and a waterwheel as a treadmill, he challenges the audience's expectations of how an object is supposed to function in the real world (Knopf 1999:128). In contrast to Keaton, Chaplin appropriates objects as his partners in dialogue. This dialogue is a key ingredient in Chaplin's blend of pathos and comedy that Dalí disapproved of as overt sentimentality.

One such scene is the "Oceana Roll," also known as "the dance of the dinner rolls" in *The Gold Rush* (Chaplin 1925). The scene takes place on New Years Eve. Chaplin's character has prepared a special meal for invited dinner guests, including love interest Georgia. His guests, however, have forgotten about the invitation, leaving the Tramp crestfallen and alone at the dinner table. While seated there, he imagines that he is entertaining his guests and they are dancing. He enacts his fantasy dance using two forks stabbed into two bread rolls. Manipulating the forks with his hands, the bread rolls approximate his oversized clown shoes and the forks function as legs. Though his hand movements are simple, Chaplin's dreamy facial expressions animate the bread rolls' simple 'steps'. He does not merely play with his food; by appropriating objects from the dinner table through which he converses, he makes his daydream listened to via a voice otherwise conveyed through his feet.

Noël Carroll contrasts his analysis of *The General* (Bruckman/Keaton 1926) with *The Gold Rush* (Carroll 2007:124-135). Carroll argues while Keaton alters the functional uses of things for comedic effect, Chaplin uses objects differently. The

Tramp sees the world differently, and thus he transforms objects into other things (Carroll 2007:56). Carroll draws a connection between this original thinking and what he sees as the Tramp's alienation from society. "The Tramp seems an outcast partly because he thinks differently" (Carroll 2007:133). Carroll classifies a type of gag in which the Tramp uses objects in a way society typically does not use them. The Tramp uses objects differently because he invents new uses for them. For example, in *The Gold Rush*, the Tramp uses his cane to lift up his trousers, which start to fall down as he dances with Georgia. By thinking differently, he does not adapt to his environment but is alienated, becoming "an apt object of pathos" (Carroll 2007:133-134).

Carroll contrasts this theme of alienation that he sees in Chaplin with Keaton's theme of concreteness as I discussed in the above example of his changing the function of a clip-on tie to a moustache. Chaplin, Carroll feels, does not attempt to make the world intelligible or concrete. The audience's experience is not intelligibility, but pathos for this outcast from society who cannot think in a conventional way (Carroll 2007:131).

I do not agree that the Tramp is an alienated individual because he thinks differently. If he does see the possibilities in objects such as forks and rolls, he appropriates these objects and their possibilities as his partners in dialogue to humanise the Tramp rather than alienate him. His dialogue with the audience via these objects expresses his referring to himself as other. He relates not to an object, but to himself as other. This dialogue communicates the Tramp's efforts to regain dignity, which works to humanise the Tramp.

2.5 Listening to the *Logos*

While Chaplin refers to himself as other, he relates to the audience, which also is other. Despite this shared otherness with the audience, Chaplin and audience are not identical. If they were identical, then this would mean Chaplin's dialogue with the audience is auto-affection. In auto-affection, speaker and listener are in absolute proximity. Chaplin and audience, however, are different. They have a dialogue with each other, in which they are separated in space and time. Through his dialogue with the audience, Chaplin refers not only to himself, but also he refers back meaning to himself as other. This dialogue is similar to the dialogue between Chaplin and objects in the film.

In appropriating objects through which to participate in discourse, such as hats or bread rolls, Chaplin maintains a relationship between different voices in a kind of 'multi-voicedness'⁹⁰ like musical polyphony. In polyphony, two or more voices utter simultaneously and develop "in a mutual relationship" (Plaza 2005:198).⁹¹ Voices meet and become "intertwined" in polyphony, whereas in antiphony - a type of polyphony known as "call and response" - speaker and listener's voices alternate back and forth in a conversational pattern (Hersch 2007:139). In call and response, a speaker calls out and listeners respond directly to the call. It is a process that involves "spontaneous verbal and non-verbal interaction between

⁹⁰ This refers to Bakhtin's concept of 'polyphony' in Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics (1929/1963). "A plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices is in fact the chief characteristic of Dostoevsky's novels" (Bakhtin 1984:6).

⁹¹ "...By listening to one voice the reader may hear something of the other, the voice that this one is answering" (Plaza 2005:198).

speaker and listener in which all of the speaker's statements ('calls') are punctuated by expressions ('responses') from the listener" (Smitherman 1977:104).

2.5.1 An Antiphonic Reading of Heraclitus Fragment B50

The Greek, *antiphon*, ἀντίφωνον means 'sounding in answer, responsive to' (Liddell/Scott 2010:82). The ἀντί denotes opposition, opposite situation, replacement, reciprocation, equivalence, negation, posteriority. φωνή means voice, cry, or shout (Pring 1965:209;17). Antiphonic discourse can be detected in Heraclitean fragments B50 and B51. Fragment B50 emphasises a call to hearers, asking them to listen to and respond to something that will culminate in a sense of unity. The communication depicted in the fragment is antiphonic in that Heraclitus describes a movement connecting speakers and listeners through call and response.

Some interpreters such as Burnet translate *logos* as the 'word' of or the discourse of Heraclitus himself (Kirk 1962:37). This interpretation poses difficulty when considering Fragment B50, because, as Kirk observes, *logos* is distinguished from the speaker in this fragment. Fragment B50 says, "Listening not to me but to the *Logos* it is wise to agree ... that all things are one" (Kirk 1962:65). According to Kirk, *logos* is not a reference to Heraclitus' own word or discourse. When Heraclitus says not to listen to him, this "should not of course be taken as prohibiting men from listening to Heraclitus, rather it implies that his words have an absolute authority from outside" (Kirk 1962:67). *Logos* involves something external to himself.

In his 1975 essay, “Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B50)” from Early Greek Thinking (Heidegger 1984:59-78), Heidegger endeavours to ascertain the meaning of Heraclitean Fragment B50, ‘If you have heard not me but rather the *logos*, then it is wise to say accordingly, ‘all is *one*’ and ‘When you have listened, not merely to me (the speaker), but rather when you maintain yourselves in hearkening attunement, then there is proper hearing’. Alternatively, ‘Attuned not to me but to the laying that gathers, letting the same lie: the fateful occurs (the laying that gathers): one unifying all’ (Heidegger/Fink 1980:10).

Heidegger approaches the riddle of *logos* by investigating the possible meanings of *legein*. “The saying of Heraclitus seems comprehensible in every respect. Nevertheless, everything about it is worthy of question” (Heidegger 1984:59). Heidegger asks how the meaning of *legein* as “the laying-down and laying-before, which gathers itself and others” comes also to mean saying and talking. He asks, what lies in *legein* as laying? To examine this question, Heidegger summons the image of a plantation of grapevines at harvest time, when grapes are gathered and laid down in shelter. In his investigation, he determines that to lay “is concerned with retaining whatever is laid down as lying before us” (Heidegger 1984:62). What lies together is sheltered (the grapes are stored securely) in unconcealment. The letting-lie-before, laid in unconcealment, comes together into presence (Heidegger 1984:63). Then, leaving the vineyard, Heidegger answers the question, what actually lies in the laying? What lies in the laying is “everything present in unconcealment.” Since everything unconcealed is *saying*, what lies in the laying is what arises when language is spoken.

Richard Kearney explains that for Heidegger, things come into being by way of language. "...In so far as they are summoned by language which bestows their meaning upon them" (Kearney 1994:43). For Kearney, Heidegger, attempting to create balance between Being and thinking, aims to restore language to poetic status. In Heidegger's later work, Kearney holds, poetic thinking is necessary for understanding *logos* (Kearney 1994:42). In Chapter Five, I will discuss the poetic differently, in terms of rhythm and rhyme. I will explain, rhythm gives immediacy to speech, connecting Chaplin, audience and film. In making himself listened to, Chaplin is not grounded in immediate self-presence, but speaks in the non-present immediacy of rhythm. For Kearney, however, poetic logic brings Being to presence as words, as 'mutual belonging by saying and Being' (Kearney 1994:43).

Hans-Georg Gadamer, whose work on hermeneutics and ontology engages with Heidegger, sees a connection between language and dialogue or conversation. Gadamer believes language is where conversation takes place. He questions Derrida on listening to one's own voice, claiming dialogue is more than a self-present voice speaking to a listener. Conversation, Gadamer contends, "...is so omnipresent that nothing else is really present, not the speaker and not the one spoken to" (Gadamer 2004:179-182). Is a conversation's rhythm connected to language? *Logos* then, would become linked to rhythm in conversation. This indicates a musical connection not explored in discussions of Heidegger's later work on language. In Chapter Five, I will explore how movement of rhythm and harmony bring call and response together, while maintaining difference at the same time. This investigation will lead to the notion that listening gives rhythm to *logos*.

Although Heidegger makes the case that the unconcealment of what is concealed, the presencing of what is present brings about the speaking of language and argues that ‘proper hearing’ or ‘hearkening’ is not merely the apprehension of sounds, but the *belonging to* speech (Heidegger 1984:64;67). There are, however, meanings of the root of *legein*, λέ(γ)ω that he does not consider (Kirk 1962:37). In “Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B50),” Heidegger focuses on the meaning of *legein* as talking or saying and as laying. He sees *legein* as holding the key to the meaning of *logos*: “What *logos* is we gather from *legein*” and *logos* means *legein* “as a saying aloud” (Heidegger 1984:60). Yet, he does not consider the meanings of λέ(γ)ω: to say, tell; recite, sing; call, name (Pring 1965:109). Does Heidegger overlook this meaning? Thinking of the *logos* as a song, a call, or a recitation reveals a musical thread running through Fragment B50, which could provide further clues to understanding Heraclitus’ fragments. This root meaning of *logos* is not merely musically oriented; it is specifically a calling or singing. This connection with a call or a sung recitation lends support to my argument in this chapter that there is antiphony evident in Fragment B50.

2.5.2 Back-turning Harmony

Though Heidegger gives no explanation for why he chooses the grape gathering metaphor to propound his theory that “saying is a letting-lie-together-before which gathers and is gathered” (Heidegger 1984:64), his reference to the harvest is indicative of an enduring relationship between agriculture and song. Singing

has accompanied cultivation ever since early farming practices.⁹² Greek farmers sang work songs while toiling in the vineyards and grain fields (Gioia 2006:35).⁹³ This supports both Heidegger's metaphor and my assertion that Fragment B50 has musical undertones. Heidegger's assertion that the *logos* is the "laying that gathers" (Heidegger 1984:66) could have a musical connotation, as the work song that labourers sing together.

In jazz vocabulary, to 'lay down' means to play music. Nicholas P. Dempsey discusses how musicians using this phrase treat music as "a thing they could act upon," manipulate, place or move (Dempsey 2008:76).⁹⁵ 'Laying it down', as

⁹² Ted Gioia's research on work songs reveals that agricultural work songs are "the oldest surviving secular songs from ancient Egypt" Gioia (2006:38).

⁹³ One example of a Greek agricultural work song is the *Lityerses*, a reaping and threshing song (Gioia 2006:36). In the *Iliad*, Book 18 (561-572), Homer describes the shield of Achilles, which depicts a vineyard with grape gatherers working while a youth plays the harp (or lyre) and sings. They are depicted toiling, singing, dancing and whistling to the music (Chapman 2000:311):

In time of vintage: youths and maids, that bore not yet the flame

Of manly Hymen, baskets bore of grapes and mellow fruit.

A lad that sweetly touch'd a harp, to which his voice did suit,

Center'd the circles of that youth, all whose skill could not do

The wanton's pleasure to their minds, that danced, sung, whistled too.

⁹⁵ Dempsey, Nicholas P., 2008. *The coordination of Action: Non-Verbal Cooperation in Jazz Jam Sessions*, ProQuest: The University of Chicago. Dissertation. This Dissertation investigates how people coordinate group activities that do not appear to have any coordination. He bases this investigation on jazz jam sessions and interviews in which people listen to and comment upon recordings of their own performances.

Dempsey explains, has a colloquial nature. The phrase is sometimes used to describe laying down the rhythm or the harmony in a piece of music or music session. He uses the example of playing with a bassist. “Playing with a soloing bass player obligates him to ‘lay down the harmony’” (Dempsey 2008:79). “Behind a bass player’s solo, one might sometimes want to ‘lay down the change’” (Dempsey 2008:78).⁹⁶ The musical, lyrical root meaning of *legein*, points to a musical lineage that has not been explored in previous interpretations of Heraclitus.

In a call and response scenario, two distinguishable phrases are uttered. One phrase is a call coming from a speaker and one phrase is a response to the call by listeners. I propose that in Fragment B50, the call is the *logos*. This is not to say that *logos* cannot mean word, speech or assertion, but that in Fragment B50, the *logos* operates as a call. In this call and response scenario, *homologeîn* refers to the responding *logos* by the listeners, saying together: ‘all is one’. Heraclitus

⁹⁶ The modern use of ‘lay down’ is significant because American and Cuban jazz employ African-derived music techniques such as polyphony and antiphony. The persistence of the phrase ‘to lay down’ in the modern practice of African derived antiphony, when taken into consideration with research into the influence of ancient African thought on pre-Socratic philosophers, Charles Hersch, author of *Subversive Sounds* (2007), writes about the African origins of antiphony in jazz. Hersch describes African art as being both “inherently dialogic” and “inseparable from the community interactions of which it is a part” (2007:137). Olela (1984), Odhiambo (1997), Gyekye (1987), Mudimbe (1994), Diop (1987), Bernal, G.G.M. James (2008) and Onyewuenyi (2005) assert that ancient Greek philosophy’s traceability to Africa, particularly Egypt. Egyptian thought and an ancient African worldview influenced the early Greek philosophers. Ancient Egypt is also intimated in Plato and Aristotle (Odhiambo 1997:30;33).

advises listeners to respond ‘all is one’ as the speaker completes his call. The listeners respond together in unity with the speaker.⁹⁹

The last line of Fragment B50 expresses this harmony: *Ev Ilàvra*, meaning ‘all is one’ or ‘all things are one’. The meaning of *Ilàvra*, or *panta*, is all things or the universe, implying there is unity in this back and forth movement of calls and responses. Its “counter-concept,” *Ev*, or *hen*, is the One (Heidegger/Fink 1993:168-169). The One is the unity of opposites found in other Heraclitean fragments, particularly in Fragment B51. “They do not apprehend how being at variance it agrees with itself: there is a connexion working in both directions, as in the bow and the lyre” (Kirk 1962:203); “[People] do not understand how, what is diverse...is in agreement...with itself: a back-turning harmony...like that of the bow and lyre” (Briggman 2012:144) and “People do not understand how what is diverse (nevertheless) coincides with itself, just like the inverse harmony of a bow and lyre.”¹⁰⁰ Robinson translates this as not an “inverse harmony,” but a “back-turning connection, like [that] of a bow or lyre” (Robinson 1991:37).

The ‘back-turning harmony’ in this interpretation is translated from *palintropos harmonie*. In Greek, *palintropos* or ‘back-turning’ also means contrary or ‘changing in the opposite direction’ (Vlastos 1995:137). Mention in Fragment B51 of the phrase, ‘back-turning harmony’ conjures the image of a lyre that is

⁹⁹ This recalls a traditional African worldview, which is based on the idea of a “unified state of balance or harmony” (Smitherman 1977:104).

¹⁰⁰ Hippolytus, S., The Refutation of All Heresies Book 9, OrthodoxEbooks, p.257.

played with a strung bow.¹⁰¹ This is contrary to most interpretations that see the bow as representing a weapon used to shoot arrows and the lyre as the strings of the lyre.¹⁰² When referring to ‘the bow and the lyre’ and a back-turning motion and harmony, Heraclitus may be speaking about the bowed lyre. With the bowed lyre, the bow moves in two opposite directions, thus exhibiting a back and forth movement indicative of the ‘unity of opposites’, the Heraclitean theme that knowing something’s opposite begets knowledge of the thing. In oppositions, ‘the former by their changing become the latter, and the latter in turn are changed and become the former’ (Jaspers 1966:18). “Any one thing following a given line of change will be found to turn in the opposite way sooner or later” (Vlastos 1995:137). Gregory Vlastos (1995:71;149) explains that opposites are the same thing but with “modifications.” In Vlastos’ ‘sameness of opposites’, the bow moves in the same way across the lyre in each different direction. This movement of change in direction of the bowing is what Vlastos would call a modification. The modification in Fragment B51 is the *palintropos* or back-

¹⁰¹ The lyre of Greece at Heraclitus’ time was plucked with the fingers (as seen with Apollo in Greek mythology). The instrument derived from similar instruments of North Africa, such as the rebab, meaning bowed instrument, or ‘played with a bow’. Andersson, Otto. 1930. The Bowed Harp, translated by Kathleen Schlesinger, London: New Temple Press, p.212. Apel, W. 1971. Harvard Dictionary of Music, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, p. 93.

¹⁰² These interpretations of Fragment B51 cite a two-way tension in the strings of the lyre, pulled taught by the lyre’s arms and in the string of a stretched bow. Kirk translates *palintronos* as ‘back-tension’-rather than *palintropos*. Tension is a theme in Kirk’s interpretations. However, as Vlastos observes, tension is not stated anywhere by Heraclitus in the fragments (Vlastos 1995:136:137). Kirk describes the unity in opposing tensions in these two objects as “The two-way tension that exists between the frame and the string in bow or lyre is said to resemble the way in which something which is being carried apart is simultaneously drawn together” (Kirk 1962: 215;216).

turning - a movement that is not one direction or its opposite, but the coming together of their change in direction.¹⁰³

In this way, the dialogue in Fragment B50 can be thought of as a *palintropos harmonie*, in which *logos* is a facet of two-way discourse or dialogue, and not a monologue to be heard. This dialogue requires listening - attending to the call of the other. Considering Vlastos, listening in Fragment B50 is the modification that changes the direction of the call and the response. The call comes, is listened to, and then is responded to. The response is then listened to and the call comes again, and so on.

Thus, the *logos* in Fragment B50 is de-centred or a *logos* that was never a centre. Richard Kearney describes how Derrida demonstrates, through deconstruction, that presence does not represent anything. We see, Kearney says, that “there never was a centre” (Kearney 1986:116). Logocentric thinking, however, which can be traced back to interpretations of Heraclitus, deems *logos* as a centre or moment of presence.¹⁰⁵ Logocentric thinking assumes that speaker and listener are present to each other in time and space, leaving no distance between them. Yet, dialogue is non-presence because it maintains temporal and spatial distance in the difference between speaker and listener. The dialogue of call and response - *logos* and *homologeîn* - in mutual interaction, assures that the two are separated

¹⁰³ The notion of back-turning evokes Nancy’s *renvoi* - a return or referring back in his “sonorous presence,” which is a “complex of returns (*renvois*)” bound in resonance (Nancy 2007:12-16). I will explain Nancy’s theory of resonance in the following chapter.

¹⁰⁵ The Stoics (beginning in the third century b.c.), Philo (c.25B.C. to A.D.50), in the Gospel of St. John (second half of the first century) and Christian theology (Jaspers 1966:24), Plato in *Cratylus* (390e-427d).

in time and space, and this difference makes immediate presence impossible. Both *logos* and *homologeîn*, though spoken, are non-present in dialogue, making *logos* in dialogue no more consonant with logocentric thinking than is listening.

2.6 Disclosure

Francisco Gonzales (2006:426-441) gives an analysis of Heidegger's views on dialogue, which hold that Socratic dialogue is merely verbal conversation and not 'true dialogue'. For Heidegger, Socratic dialogue relies on dialectic, engaging in conversations with others in which Socrates confronts one *logos* with another *logos*. Heidegger sees dialectic as a hindrance that blocks access to the truth of being. He believes that true dialogue is not verbal, but silent. In this line of thinking, true dialogue is not an exchange of *logoi* in discourse; it transcends *logos*, and reveals the unspoken or unsaid (Gonzales 2006:432-433). This is a similar observation to Emad's in that Emad thinks Heidegger's *Rede* is in silent proximity to disclosure (Emad 1986:128). In Heidegger's later writing, *Rede* unfolds into *Sage* and "on his way to determining the essence of language as *sage*, Heidegger refers to the Heraclitus fragments as the silent word which is to be distinguished from the sounding of words" (Emad 1986:128).

Does listening reveal the unsaid? The Tramp, being *schweigt*, is without words or the resonance of his vocal cords. He also carries few inter-titles and rarely moves his lips to mime speech. He seems to transcend *logos*. However, the Tramp heeds and answers a call. With his Tramp character, Chaplin shows us how dialogue can be a silent exchange of *logoi* in discourse. His *schweigen* is dialogical silence. This exchange reveals the unsaid. "What is unspoken is not merely something that lacks voice, it is what remains unsaid, what is not yet

shown, what has not yet reached its appearance” (Heidegger 1971:122). In the Heraclitean Fragment B50, *logos* is revealed or disclosed when it is listened to. Listening discloses the *logos*.

Heidegger, in Early Greek Thinking, discusses how the meaning of *legein*, to lay, saying and talking or the “letting-lie-together-before” means, “everything unconcealed.” He contends the unconcealment of the concealed is “presencing of what is present” or “the Being of beings” (Heidegger 1984:62-64). Heidegger, in his lecture course at the University of Freiburg during the winter semester in 1931 and 1932, published as, *The Essence of Truth: On Plato’s Cave Allegory and Theatetetus* discusses the Greek word for truth, *aletheia* in its original meaning, ‘unhiddenness’, which he links to the deconcealment of being. “We seek the essence of truth as the unhiddenness of beings in deconcealment, as a deconcealing *occurrence* upon whose ground man exists” (Heidegger 2002:7;58). He explains, “concealment belongs essentially to unhiddenness, *like the valley belongs to the mountain*” (Heidegger 2002:66). Only by overcoming concealment can a struggle against hiddenness or *aletheia* happen. In Being and Time, meaning is concealed in language and the change after Being and Time expresses the concealment and disclosure of Being.

A later seminar at University of Freiburg during the winter semester, 1966 and 1967, co-directed by Heidegger and Fink was published as Heraclitus Seminar (Sallis/Maly 1980:vii). In Kenneth Maly’s essay on that seminar, “Man and Disclosure,” (Maly 1979:43-60), he equates an issue of *logos*, an issue of disclosure and an issue of being. (Maly 1979:44-45;56). The one “does not get its determination from *what* is gathered,” but in terms of *logos* and *aletheia* (Maly

1979:56). *Aletheia* or disclosure is emergence from hiddenness, unfolding from withdrawing. “Everything in Heraclitus and in early Greek thinking imaged therein, has to do with disclosure: emerging and the hidden reserve” (Maly 1979:56;45).

Maly draws a parallel between the question of *logos* and the issue of disclosure (*aletheia*), averring all early Greek thinking has to do with disclosure. Maly cites Heraclitus Fragment B1, “everything comes to be in accordance with and owing to *logos*” (Maly 1980:56). Everything is understood through this disclosure, “coming to be,” or “emerging from out of a hiddenness” (Maly 1980:50;53-56). After early Greek thinking, the turn into metaphysics sees the cessation of the issue of disclosure. Metaphysics is only concerned with what is present, what is already disclosed. It seems that philosophy has left listening out to dry, stranded on dry land like a fish out of water (Heidegger 1946/1998:240). As Gadamer questions the metaphysical concept of presence, arguing dialogue is “not simply about the presence of a voice speaking to a listener” (Gadamer 2004:179). Post-Socratic metaphysics, Kearney reminds us, reduced *logos* to logic. Kearney believes in relinquishing our control over language “that language can itself speak and thus become a disclosure of Being” (Kearney 1994:41;43). As my discussion of Nancy will unfold in Chapter Three, the movement of resonance in dialogue makes manifest listening (*l’écoute*).

2.7 Chaplin’s *logos* disclosed

In revealing the unsaid, Chaplin resounds in unspoken discourse. In his talkies, the addition of speech could undermine this discourse. For instance, after Verdoux tussles with his companion in a rowboat, he comically falls overboard.

As he rises to the surface, he asks, “Where’s my hat?” This line, delivered in the last shot of the scene lacks humour. Chaplin could recycle the line, ‘where’s my hat’ with great success many times over in his silent films, but as spoken dialogue, it simply punctuates the scene. The line adds nothing comical or narrative.

The shift from silent comedy to sound comedy in the 1930s echoes a tendency in Western philosophical thinking of a logocentric tradition that carries the self-present notion that speech is primary. This chapter attempts to show that Chaplin’s silent work defies a logocentric bias in that his Tramp character’s *logos* is his dialogue through movement, rather than speech. It refers to the Heraclitean fragments in which *logos* operates outside the context of a logocentric tradition. Both Heraclitean *logos* and Chaplin’s *logos* are an attending to and an answering in two-way discourse or dialogue, thereby exposing *logos* as something not at the centre. Dialogue is not immediately present because there is a difference in speaker and listener, which maintains temporal and spatial distance. In this way, attending to the other requires space and time.

In Being and Time, Heidegger deems this aspect of the exchanging of meaning through discourse as hearkening or listening. Nancy, a thinker who favours multiplicity over Heidegger’s thinking of being, turns to *l’écoute* and *l’entente* to express the multiple meanings of listening. Nancy propounds that listening is at once an understanding or a making sense of utterances (*l’entente*), as well as a stretching toward resonant meaning (*l’écoute*). This stretching extends towards

the disclosure of meaning, or as Nancy puts it, "...the edge of meaning..." (Nancy 2007:6).¹⁰⁶

How does Chaplin accomplish access to himself through discourse, and manage to make his listening listened to, while bypassing presence to self? Why does Morin cite Chaplin as an example of the openness to others as other subjects that Morin wishes to teach? The answer to these questions lies in Chaplin's listening to himself-as-other or *il s'écoute*. Chaplin would not have been able to express the Tramp's *s'écouter* in a talkie. Chaplin never made a talkie with the Tramp. If he could have, then not only would audiences hear the Tramp speak, but the Tramp would hear himself speak. This is the self-proximity of hearing-oneself-speak (*s'entendre parler*) that Derrida discusses in *Speech and Phenomena* (Derrida 1973:79). In this scenario, the voice is in absolute proximity to the speaker (Lawlor 2002:192). It is in absolute proximity because the voice does not pass through an outside. "It is absolute reduction of space" Derrida (1973:79). For Chaplin, his dialogue with himself as other passes through the audience, which is different from Chaplin. This difference makes his voice not absolutely proximate to himself and thus not immediately self-present. In talkies, it would be impossible for the Tramp to maintain the difference when his voice would be heard and understood by *s'entendre parler*. A hypothetical talking Tramp would lose the interrelationship with the audience that the silent Tramp has. The Tramp and audience are a difference and a relation at the same time.

¹⁰⁶ "To be listening is always to be on the edge of meaning..." (Nancy 2007:6).

An alternative reading of Heraclitus fragments B50 and 51 suggests a back and forth stretching movement between speakers that involves listening. In my interpretation, this movement reveals dialogue as communication among differences, in which speaking and listening are in harmony. Previous interpretations of Heraclitus fragments have not explored the musical lineage that my readings suggest. In Chapter Five, I will explore how movement of rhythm and harmony bring call and response together, while maintaining difference at the same time. This investigation will lead to the notion that listening gives rhythm to *logos*.

The back and forth stretching movement performed in the antiphony of call and response is a mutual interaction of *logos* and *homologeîn* in dialogue. Dialogue fosters openness to the *logos* of the other, where meaning is disclosed by *l'écoute*. Speaker and listener in this scenario are not simultaneous, ensuring dialogue is not immediate presence. The difference in call and response means that neither *logos* nor *l'écoute* is consonant with logocentric thinking. This distinction is manifest in Chaplin because his silent dialogue is with himself by way of the other. Whether conversing with his hat or with his feet, he stretches toward sonority. Chaplin's *logos* discloses meaning in polyphonic dialogue, making him less like Keaton and more like Dostoevsky. The shared meaning and co-being of Chaplin's dialogue with the audience and with himself as other presupposes an attending to the other that is Nancean *l'écoute*.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have given examples of how Chaplin, via a dialogue, refers to himself as other without immediate self-presence. This dialogue involves a type

of listening that requires attention to the other. The Tramp, to whom I referred as a peculiarly dialogical figure, need not speak in this dialogue. Through a rereading of Heraclitus fragments, I argued a logocentric tradition sourced in these fragments is more a relation to dialogue between call and response, than a distinction between speech and listening. The difference between call and response renders neither is in absolute proximity or immediate self-presence. In this reading, *logos* is not a moment of presence. With similarities to this movement of call and response, Chaplin conducts a dialogue between himself and other. Self and other are not opposable, separate parts of Chaplin's self, but linked subjects. I will explore this further in Chapter Four, where I discuss Derrida's phrase, *se toucher toi*, which is both immediacy and interruption. A discussion of *se toucher toi* will lead me to examine the meaning of the expression, 'I and I', as well as Maurice Merleau-Ponty's non-dualistic divergence or *écart*, in which self and other are intertwined. In Chapter Four, I will discuss this non-dualistic difference between self and other in Chaplin's dialogue.

In the next chapter, I will turn to Nancy to explore what he defines as the subject as the space of a self. Nancy tells us that in listening, the subject refers to itself. This referral is the relationship to self that is a "mutual referral between a perceptible individuation and an intelligible identity" (Nancy 2007:8).

I will investigate the Nancean theory of resonance using the fable of Echo and Narcissus in Ovid, in which Echo is doomed by an angry goddess never to speak for herself again. Echo loses her place of resonance, and as a result, cannot listen or resound. I will examine in the next chapter, how Chaplin is a place of Nancean

resonance. Who is listening for Nancy is a place of resonance in which a sonorous body refers back to itself as other and is neither a withdrawal nor self-presence. I will return to Nancy's question that I discussed in Chapter One, 'Can philosophy listen as *l'écoute*'? Can philosophy listen as a place of resonance?

By way of a discussion into Spivak's reading of Echo and Nancy's counter to Hallward's criticisms of Nancy, I will show *l'écoute* and *l'entente* are in a relation that is immediacy and a break with immediacy not dissociable in the movement of resonance.

Chapter Three: Chaplin's call and Echo's response

In Chapter Two, I questioned the tradition of logocentric thinking through a rereading of Heraclitus that emphasised an inherent connection between dialogue and a form of listening, which is an attending to the call of the other. In this construal, *logos* is not at the centre. Antiphonic discourse, evident in some Heraclitean fragments, discloses meaning by way of an openness to the *logos* of the other. This openness relates to the thread of exposure or opening in Nancy's work that I discussed in Chapter One. Here, I am referring to the difference between antiphony's call and response, which prevents closedness. The two are not simultaneous. There is a difference of time and space between the call and the response. Thus, their antiphony creates an opening in this difference, making them not immediately present.

There is closedness in the privileging of speech that Derrida argues leads to a self-presentation of meaning. For Derrida, immediate proximity of speaker and listener lies in hearing oneself speak at the same time that one speaks. He calls this auto-affection. In this immediate proximity, temporal or spatial distance among the speaker, spoken word and listener is destroyed. Derrida's discussion of hetero-affection holds that speaker and listener are not immediately self-present. They maintain a difference between them, which is not *s'entendre parler*, but a 'me and myself as other' (Lawlor 2002:192). Derrida sees difference in 'me and myself as other', rather than the unity of the *cogito*'s self-positing 'I'.

As I discussed in Chapter One, the difference between speaker and hearer opens

into a momentary gap or hiatus (Lawlor 2002:192).¹⁰⁷ This openness, in which experiences of space and time are made possible, is key in examining the dialogue that I believe is peculiar to Chaplin.

This is illustrated in a discussion of Chaplin's speechless discourse with objects and discourse with himself as other. In Chapter One, I discussed Nancy's distinction between *l'écoute* and *l'entente*, where *l'entente* means understanding and hearing and *l'écoute* is listening that stretches toward meaning. Chapter One introduced the question of how Chaplin, in the role of a silent figure, listens to himself (*il s'écoute*), but not in self-presence. In the current chapter, I will continue with a discussion of the Tramp figure's speechless dialogue as I consider Nancean questions of subjectivity and body, under an overarching theme of resonance. I turn now to a source for these questions in the fable of Echo and Narcissus in Ovid's Metamorphoses. Readings of Ovid's fable by Derrida and Spivak discuss Echo's struggle to maintain a self-as-other relation and her dilemma surrounding a place of resonance. I will draw on these readings in order to illustrate the Nancean notion of resonance.

3.1 Ovid's fable of Echo and Narcissus

In an act of revenge, the goddess Juno imprecates a curse on the nymph Echo, permanently undermining her ability to initiate speech. As a result, Echo has no means to speak for herself. She may only ever reply. Juno tells her, 'You shall still have the last word, but no power to speak first' (Bulfinch 2000:80). Echo's

¹⁰⁷ Lawlor, L., 2006. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, "Jacques Derrida," <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/derrida/#BasArgImpTimHeaOneSpeSecSov>

voice is reduced to a single reflection, as she can only repeat the last words of another's speech. In Metamorphoses Book III (476-479):¹⁰⁸

She long'd her hidden Passion to reveal,

And tell her Pains, but had not Words to tell:

She can't begin, but waits for the Rebound,

To catch his Voice, and to return the Sound.

After failing to woo Narcissus, the body of the afflicted Echo withers and disappears, leaving just bones and an echoing voice. Echo's bones turn to stone eventually, and she becomes solely the vibrations that bounce off the surfaces of mountains and caves (486-489):

The sounding Skeleton, of Blood bereft,

Besides her Bones and Voice had nothing left.

Her Bones are petrify'd, her Voice is found

In Vaults, where still it Doubles ev'ry Sound.

In the fable, Echo re-bounds the last words spoken to her. When a signal rebounds, it bounces back after hitting a hard surface or object. Echo is the throwing back or reflection of that signal. The difference between the bouncing or throwing back of a signal and the turning back in the bow and the lyre from

¹⁰⁸ From Book III "The Transformation of Echo" in: Ovid, 1992. Ovid's metamorphoses in fifteen books. Translated by the most Eminent Hands, Cambridge, UK: Chadwyck-Healey.

Heraclitus Fragment B51, is that echoing is the pushing off of an edge of a surface and the return of that signal in the direction from whence it came. Within the resonating body of the lyre, waves bounce off of each other and resound. Waves resound from within the body and reverberate or echo outside of that body.

Echo herself is a body at the beginning of the fable, and then becomes disembodied as her affliction progresses. There is a point in the story, however, that the cursed Echo does manage to resound. Interpretations by Adriana Cavarero (2005), Derrida (2002)(2005) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1993) describe the brief time - after losing her ability to respond, but before losing her body and turning to stone - that Echo speaks to Narcissus. “Echo repeats the last words of Narcissus and speaks in such a way that the words become her own. In a certain way, she appropriates his language” (Derrida 2002).¹⁰⁹ When Narcissus asks, ‘Who’s here’, Echo replies, ‘Here!’ “Amazed, he looks around in all directions and with loud voice cries ‘Come!’; and ‘Come!’ she calls him calling” (Miller 1984:1;151) (Bulfinch 2000:80;81). Yet, when Narcissus calls, ‘Why do you fly from me?’ Echo repeats, ‘fly from me’. Echo repeats the words ‘fly from me’, speaking in the imperative.

In her rereading of Echo and Narcissus, Spivak discerns a *différance* - a difference and a deferment - in this section of the fable. This “impossibility between Latin interrogative and imperative” causes a difference and a deferment. The difference is between Narcissus’s question and Echo’s response, in which

¹⁰⁹ Derrida, 2002. Dir. Dick, K. & Ziering, A. USA: Zeitgeist Films. DVD.

two separate “subject-positions” develop. The deferment is in the independence of Echo’s words, ‘fly from me’ from Narcissus’s intention. Though Echo repeats Narcissus’s words, she speaks her own imperative response, thus deferring the question that Narcissus intends to ask and to which he expects to receive a response (Spivak 1993:183-185). Echo, however, speaks the opposite of, and independently from Narcissus’s intention. In this way, she manages to speak outside of the restrictions of her punishment, though what she conveys is not the answer to the question asked. She is “...the possibility of a truth not dependent upon intention...” (Spivak 1993:183-185). “She speaks in her own name by just repeating his words” (Derrida 2002).¹¹⁰ It is Echo’s autonomy from intention that Spivak calls “the failure of her punishment” (Spivak 1993:185). Spivak shows us how Echo eludes the malediction by speaking not in relation to Narcissus’ question, but by way of his calling to her. She calls to his calling, but not to his question, thereby speaking autonomously from his intention.

Intention has tension in it. This tension is directed toward an object.¹¹¹ I established in Chapter One that Nancy describes two distinct tensions in Listening (Nancy 2006:69). The current chapter further examines and clarifies this distinction between a motion toward a tension (*l’écoute*) and a movement of tension inward toward a subject (*l’entente*). In this way, *l’écoute* can be a tension or attention to the other. The prefix ad- in attention indicates a motion to. The en- in *entendre* denotes in; into; toward or within, making *l’entente* an intension or

¹¹⁰ Derrida, 2002. Dir. Dick, K. & Ziering, A. USA: Zeitgeist Films. DVD.

¹¹¹ They share the Latin root, *ten*, meaning, to stretch.

intending toward a subject. The object in *l'écoute* is the other and in *l'entente* the object is the self. Nancean listening is what he describes as “access to self” (Nancy 2007:12):

To be listening is thus to enter into tension and to be on the lookout for a relation to self: *not*, it should be emphasized, a relationship to ‘me’ (the supposedly given subject), or to the ‘self’ of the other (the speaker...with his subjectivity), but to the *relationship in self*, so to speak, as it forms a ‘self’ or a ‘to itself’...

The relation Nancy discusses here is a relation of a self to *itself as other*. He does not refer to a ‘me and myself’ or a self that hears itself as it speaks. He is careful to say the self as other that he is describing is not the other’s self. It is the self *as* other, and not the self *of* the other. In saying, “To be listening is...to be on the lookout for a relation to self...” Nancy gives a description of listening (*l'écoute*) as a tension or a keeping watch (Nancy 2007:12). This could refer to the attention or attending to that stretches toward meaning.

The “relationship in self” (Nancy 2007:12) or *le rapport en soi* (Nancy 2002:30) is not self-presence. Nancy calls this a “sonorous present,” consisting of a “complex of returns (*renvois*)” (Nancy 2007:13;16). It is a presence that has mobility and is not fixed like a being-there is present. It returns or refers to itself where it “*encounters* itself” (Nancy 2007:16).

3.2 Resonance

The motion of *l'écoute* that Nancy talks about is resonance, a mixing together and intensifying action of vibrations. In resonance, the prefix re- operates as an

intensifier, expressing a frequentative or intensive force. By this definition, re-reveals frequent repetition or intensity of action and not purely repetition. In Listening (Nancy 2007), Nancy begins by interpreting resonance as a repetition, and then goes on to expound on resonance as amplification, extension, as well as a turning back (*rebroussement*) (Nancy 2007:9). Resonance is “the repetition where sound is amplified and spreads, as well as the turning back (*rebroussement*) where the echo is made by making itself heard” (Nancy 2007:9). In turning back, a sonorous body makes its vibrations listened to. It is “resolved into vibrations that both return it to itself and place it outside itself” (Nancy 2007:8). Nancy explains, vibrations housed in a sonorous body mingle amongst themselves, intensify and turn back on themselves thereby making themselves listened to. Vibrations that undergo this back-turning movement change in intensity. They stretch out in space through amplification and extend in time, lengthening their duration. This intensifying movement creates a “sonorous present,” which “opens a space that is its own, the very spreading out of its resonance, its expansion and its reverberation” (Nancy 2007:13).

3.3 Hallward's Critique of Nancy

Nancy describes the turning back (*rebroussement*) as a “complex of returns” or *renvoi*, a referring back. For Nancy, *renvoi* is meaning that the body resonates in “waves of referring back.” Thus, it is the way a sonorous body refers to itself, sends meaning back to its self (*s'envoie*), and listens to itself (Nancy 2007:9). The reflexive, *s'envoie* comes from the infinitive, *envoyer*, meaning ‘to send’, as in a letter or a parcel. *Renvoyer*, meaning ‘to return’ or ‘to send back’ gives us

renvoi, ‘return’ also as in a letter or parcel. *Rebrousser chemin* means ‘to turn back’, as one would do on a dead end country road.¹¹² In Nancean resonance, a subject refers back to itself as other, in a movement of spatial and temporal non-presence.

A sonorous body resounds by turning meaning back on its self. Nancy illustrates the sonorous body that listens to itself in “Ascoltando,” the introduction to Peter Szendy’s book about listening to music (Nancy 2008a:ix-xiii). When a sonorous body is struck, it “returns the blow” by “the vibration of the blow itself” (Nancy 2008a:x). In a vibrating body, meaning opens up, amplifies and extends by way of *l’écoute*, rather than in signification. A sonorous body’s self is a return, where meaning and vibrations refer to each other in resonance. Thus, listening opens itself up to resonance and resonance opens itself up to the self (Nancy 2007:12;25). Listening is an access to self, and to be listening (*à l’écoute*) is to stretch toward “the opening of meaning” (Nancy 2002:9;27).

In Peter Hallward’s essay, “Jean-Luc Nancy and the Implosion of Thought” (Hallward 2007:159-180), Hallward thinks of Nancean terms such as ‘listening’ as intransitive and desubstantialized verbs, with no substance. “An acting that transmits nothing but this acting alone...” (Hallward 2007:163). The original title of Nancy’s *Listening* (Nancy 2007) is *À l’écoute* (Nancy 2002), which means ‘to be listening to something’. The ‘to’, however, would further offend Hallward because, he states, “...a pure transmitting-*to*...transmits nothing other than the

¹¹² Corréard, M.-H. & Grundy, V. 1997. The Oxford-Hachette French Dictionary, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 311, 680, 704, 1832.

‘to’ as such” (Hallward 2007:163). This point supports his overall assertion that groups Nancean thought with the non-relational, singular principles that haunt modern French philosophy, citing a lack of relation between a presenting and what is presented, with no mediation except from itself. He argues that Nancy is preoccupied with the distinction between the presentable thing that has come to be present and the fact of its coming into presence, with more priority given to presencing. Citing from The Gravity of Thought (Nancy 1993a), Hallward contends a presented thing is preceded by the ‘movement of a presentation *to*...which is a rupture of presence itself’.”

The rupturing, Nancy goes on to express, is “a rupture of signification itself and its order” (Nancy 1993a:63). In this passage from The Gravity of Thought, the movement of “presentation *to*” exposes philosophy to sense at the limit of signification. Nancy often uses the term, sense (*sens*) as ‘meaning’ and at other times as ‘sense’. When *sens* is sense, and not meaning or signification, it is a direction toward the outer limit of signification. Thus, sense is not the relation of a *signifiant* and a *signifié*, which in Saussure’s theory,¹¹³ form the linguistic sign.¹¹⁴ Nancy’s idea of sense is the excess of signification and this excess or

¹¹³ Ferdinand-Mongin de Saussure, whose work on ‘the life of signs as part of social life’ structuralists appropriated to found the field of semiology. In his theory of the sign, outlined in the Cours de linguistique générale (1916), the sign is a single experience formed by sound and thought. Therefore, sound and thought are inextricably linked and cannot be isolated. The sign is made up of the *signifiant* and the *signifié* (Cobley 2010:3;312;317).

¹¹⁴ *Signifiant* is the sound pattern of a sign. By Saussure’s definition of *signifiant*, it is one half of what makes up the linguistic sign in the mind. The English term, ‘signifier’, as it is often translated, implies that *signifiant* is a material element confounding Saussure’s original intention. Likewise, *signifié* and the English ‘signified’, which wrongly implies a thing that is signified.

outer limit becomes meaning and signification. In this way, sense precedes and makes possible, meaning and signification (James 2006:9).

“*Être à l’écoute*,” says Nancy, “is always to be on the edge of meaning...” [...*c’est toujours être en bordure du sens*...] (Nancy 2007:7) (Nancy 2002:21). This excess or edge of meaning is what Nancy argues listening (*l’écoute*) is stretching toward. This notion of stretching or straining relates to the tension I discussed in Chapter One. When straining is used in Listening, Nancy uses *tender*, ‘to stretch’ in *À l’écoute*. “Si ‘entendre’, c’est comprendre le sens...écouter, e’est être tendu vers un sens possible, et par conséquent non immédiatement accessible (Nancy 2002:19). “If ‘to hear’ is to understand the sense...to listen is to be straining toward a possible meaning, and consequently one that is not immediately accessible” (Nancy 2007:6). He bases this meaning on resonance or a resonant sense (Nancy 2007:7).

Sense, or *sens* in Nancy’s original text of The Gravity of Thought, has several interpretations, depending on Nancy’s purpose. This is a bone of contention in English translations of Nancy’s work in general, as translators often disagree over what is meant by *sens*. One definition of *sens* is signification, meaning, *vouloir-dire*, or *Bedeutung* (Nancy 2006b:113). Francois Raffoul, for instance, uses *sens* as ‘meaning’ throughout his translation of The Gravity of Thought (Nancy 1993b). However, James modifies Raffoul’s version of this text when cited in The Fragmentary Demand (James 2006:8-9), using ‘sense’ for *sens* in order to differentiate between sense and meaning or signification. Charlotte Mandell, translator of Listening (Mandell 2007:xi-xii), alerts the reader to three types of sense (*sens*). She indicates these as meaning, sense, and direction. In

“The Necessity of Sense” (Nancy 2006b), Nancy himself gives yet another definition of sense (*sens*) as a mixture of meaning as well as direction. He describes this direction definition of sense (*sens*) as a being-*to*. The being-*to* of sense is not being in or for itself, but being “outside of oneself, being to oneself as though sent, thrown, or dispatched, not having arrived, still coming” (Nancy 2006b:113).

For Hallward, this sense of being is non-relational and absolute because the meaning of being is a constant deferring of the sense of the world, which is only coming-to-be, and which never arrives. In Nancy’s non-relational foundation, or “non-foundation,” Hallward maintains, there is no relation to what has come or to what will come (Hallward 2007:160;172). Hallward asserts in the denouement of this essay, that his main concern is about changing the world. “How,” Hallward demands, “can anything that has been, change our coming-to-be, if philosophy is based on a non-relation?” He espouses a philosophy that is specific, relational, worldly, and proposes a “relational alternative” that involves active mediation, in which we pose questions about the relationship between “what the world is and what it has been,” between what has come and what will come (Hallward 2003:23) (Hallward 2007:159;169;177). Otherwise, he cautions, what is to come will be withdrawn from, and have no relation to, the past. That relation to the past applies to, “exploitation, slavery, colonialism, neo-colonialism...; but also, to actual solidarities, liberation struggles, collective actions, specific projects of emancipation or transformation...” (Hallward 2007:177).

Hallward associates Nancy’s work with what Hallward considers the

shortcomings of modern French philosophy – singularity and non-relation – arguing Nancy merely distinguishes between what has come to be present and the fact of its coming into presence. For example, Nancy stresses ‘listening’ and not what is listened to. Whereas Hallward faults Nancy for ignoring any relation between what has come and what will come, Nancean resonance, which involves a referring back of meaning to a self as other, engages with these issues. Pre-empting Hallward’s claim that his philosophy is based on a non-relation, Nancy, in a discussion of resonance in Listening foils Hallward’s critique.

3.4 Gance’s *Napoléon*

One filmmaker among Chaplin’s contemporaries that offers a relational alternative is the French director Abel Gance. In his 1927 film *Napoléon* (Gance 1927), Gance seeks a connection with the past, while bringing a political message to a 1920s French audience. I will argue in this section that Gance does produce a relational alternative that Hallward insists on with his historical fiction film. In this way, Gance demands mediation between what has come and what will come. Made in Europe between the two world wars, Gance draws on contemporary references to connect his own world in post World War I Europe and what the world was during the French Revolution (Sorlin 1980:71). Film historian, Norman King writes about *Napoléon* as a film that in making the past actual promotes in its audience, the desire for social and political change. King argues that Gance is a filmmaker who works to create for his historical film, an audience that will become enthusiastic about changing the contemporary world (King 1990:32), thus relating what has come and what will come, as Hallward demands. This is epitomised in Gance’s use of a Paul Valéry quote in the film: ‘The idea of the past is meaningful and has value only for a person who finds,

within himself a passion for the future' (Gance 1927).¹¹⁵

An earlier Gance film that forges a relation to the past is *J'accuse* (Gance 1919), about the atrocities of World War I, which moved European audiences with its clear anti-war, pacifist message. *J'accuse* makes direct reference to events of World War I and the war's effect on its audience. Like *J'accuse*, Gance's main concern in *Napoléon* is with contemporary issues. In a Hallwardian sense, the film connects what has come to what will come. Gance aims his message toward an audience desiring radical social changes, but the message the film carries is also political, specifically, the desire to end factionalism in France (Bowman 2006).¹¹⁶ Pierre Sorlin explains how it is an historical film that addresses the problems of the day. *J'accuse*, "using the pretext of the past, reorganizes the present" (Sorlin 1980:71;80). Gance addresses a desire for social and political change that he felt Europe during the inter-war period demanded. Gance's method for doing this is to create a completely fictional version of events.

In fictionalising events, Gance employs blatant historical inaccuracies that enraged critics of the time. Emile Vuillermoz and Léon Moussinac, in particular, objected to Gance's rewriting of history, misrepresentation of the French Revolution, and what they felt was the romanticization of a massacre (King

¹¹⁵ "L'idée du passé ne prend un sens et ne constitue une valeur que pour l'homme qui se trouve en soi-même une passion de l'avenir." Valéry, Paul, 1931. Regards sur le Monde Actuel, Paris: Librairie Stcock, Delamain et Boutelleau, p.6.

¹¹⁶ Bowman, Dean, 2006. "Fragments of a Great Event Viewed from a Tiny Room: Abel Gance's *Napoléon*, Film History and Conservation," in *Senses of Cinema*, issue 38, 07 February 2006.
<http://www.sensesofcinema.com/2006/feature-articles/napoleon/>.

1984:27;34;46).¹¹⁷ Vuillermoz, while ruthlessly condemning the film's fictionalization of the past for Gance's own didactical purposes, also sees the film in relational terms that Hallward might approve of. "...By making light of the history of yesterday he (Gance) is, without realising it, helping to write the history of tomorrow" (King 1984:48)! Gance's historical fiction is the type of mediation that Hallward calls for.

That the film mythologizes Bonaparte angered critics in 1927, yet film historians today appreciate that Gance's motive is to inspire in audiences a passion for ending factionalism in French politics.¹¹⁸ Gance intends to change the world in which he lives, and hence, bases his film on a relational positioning that engages French history and his own France-to-come. The message of *Napoléon* involves change *and* world, and not the absolute one *or* the other, without relation (Hallward 2003:23). It considers war *and* pacifism, patriotism *and* revolution, history *and* what is to come. In this way, the film addresses the demand that both Gance and Hallward see for a relational alternative, and not pure singularity.

3.5 Relation

I have thus far considered how Gance supports Hallward's argument against Nancy. For Hallward, active mediation and relation to the past involves some

¹¹⁷ Vuillermoz called the film a "proto-fascist apologia of dictatorship," while for Moussinac; Gance's fictional Bonaparte is "A Bonaparte for budding fascists" (King 1984:32;35).

¹¹⁸ The film's full title, *Napoléon vu par Abel Gance* states explicitly that the film is about Bonaparte as seen by Gance, and not an authentic depiction of Bonaparte.

relationship between what has come in the world and what will come (Hallward 2003:23) (Hallward 2007:159;169;177). Nancy's work has a relational aspect to it. Here, I will consider that the relational alternative for Nancy is in the plurality of singularity. He discusses this in his essay, "Of Being Singular Plural" (Nancy 2000:1-99), in which Nancy reminds us that the Latin for 'singular' is plural - *singuli*. In this way, singularity is inseparable from plurality. The singular is each one. It "designates the 'one' as belonging to 'one by one'." It is *with* and *among* others, where the 'with' shares "time-space" (Nancy 2000:32). This means, "Being is with Being" in the same time and same place. Nancy identifies the question of Being is turning into a question of being-with, and being-with as being-together in the world. He sees in this, a cause of concern (Nancy 2000:35).

This is what is signified by (our) modern sense of anxiety, which does not so much reveal a 'crisis of society' but, instead, reveals that the 'sociality' or 'association' of humans is an injunction that humanity places on itself, or that it receives from the world: to have to be only what it is and to have to, itself, be Being as such.

This imperative leads Nancy to a rethinking of community, a theme on which Christopher Fynsk writes, "starts from the *relation* and not from the solitary subject or individual." It is a relation of "multiple singular articulations" (Fynsk 1991:x). The singular-plural world, according to Nancy, heeds to the singularity of beings, but also to their relationality (James 2006:112). Despite the recurrence of relation and the singular-plural in Nancy's work, Hallward still holds that Nancean thought follows singular, non-relational, absolute principles, free from any actual relation in the world or relation to other principles (Hallward

2007:159;160).

Hallward's argument that Nancean concepts do not appertain to particular projects, policies, and practices is convincing at first. In Nancy's earlier work, he expounds on theories such as community and freedom, but draws no overt relation to what community or freedom in the world are, what they have been, or what will come. A closer reading of his later essays, however, shows evidence of the rethinking of themes from his early work. For instance, "The Truth of Democracy" (Nancy 2010) is read in relation to May 1968.

This is not the first of Nancy's work to examine actual relation in the world. Originally published in 1991, "War, Right, Sovereignty – Techne" (Nancy 2000:101-143), and "Eulogy for the Mêlée" (Nancy 2000:145-158), written in 1993, engage Nancean themes, including, identity, community, and sovereignty. At the same time, they are "connected to the exact circumstances of the most violent events of these last years," namely, the first Gulf War and the war in Sarajevo (Nancy 2000:xvi). "The Senses of Democracy" (Nancy 2010a), written in 1999, and "Is Everything Political" (Nancy 2010b), written in 2000 connect Nancy's thoughts on democracy with politics in Europe from 1789 to the present-day.

Nancy bases much of his previous work, following on from Heidegger's line, around a concern about the end of philosophy. He contemplates the question of what this notion of philosophy's closure means today. In his essay addressing that very question, entitled, "'You ask me what it means today...' An Epigraph for Paragraph" (Nancy 1993b:108-110), Nancy uses the metaphor of a cracked vessel of philosophy that is leaking meaning. Faced with the decampment of

sense, philosophy, which is the thinking of sense, exposes itself to this “sense in the absence of sense.” Nancy does not name this exposure a new philosophy or a new vessel, but sees it as a revolution that is already underway (Nancy 1993b:109). The end of philosophy is an opening at the limit of signification, where sense itself is exposed. In this way, coming-to-be, coming to presence, is the exposure of sense at the end of philosophy, and sense is in excess of signification.

What Hallward regards as a constant deferring, withdrawal, or a coming-to-be that never arrives, is for Nancy, rather an exposure or an opening at the limit of signification. Sense is coming into presence, not as withdrawal, but as an opening, and an opening to world is exposed beyond the limit. The limit exposes and makes contact through an “edge.” The edge, Nancy explains in “Banks, edges, limits (of singularity),” is the part of the singular that is exposed to the limit (Nancy 2004:43). The edge singularizes the singular, which posits itself as its own limit (Nancy 2004:43;45). This “singular finitude” keeps the limits of the singular intact as it relates the singular with being and sense. (Nancy 2004:43;47).

Nancy demands that resonance be treated “not only as the condition but as the very beginning and opening up of sense, as beyond-sense or sense that goes beyond signification” (Nancy 2007:31). Chaplin continually exposes himself to his own limit, and this limit exceeds signification. Is Chaplin’s meaning disclosed on the edge? Chaplin is always on the edge of meaning, coming-to-be, opening, exposed.

This brings new light to the phrase, “To be listening is always to be on the edge

of meaning...” (Nancy 2007:7). Listening, then, is to be in the place of exposure (opening) to the end of meaning. The edge, Nancy explains in Listening, or what is listened to has resonant meaning; its *sense* is in resonance (Nancy 2007:7). Both sense and resonance consist of *renvois*. Sense, for Nancy, is “a totality of referrals,” and resonance is the referring back of that which is listened to to its self (Nancy 2007:7;8).

Hallward, for whom Nancy’s ontology of sense is the constant deferring, and not referring, talks about the withdrawal of every presencing from any presentation or presentation of itself (Hallward 2007:161). Yet, presence “comes to presence, without being to its-self,” Nancy explains in his introduction to Who Comes After the Subject? (Nancy 1991:1-8). Hallward would instead say this is the coming-to-be that never arrives, but in Nancy’s view, the movement of presence *to* is not “to-itself.” In this way, the subject is never “the subject of itself” (Nancy 1991:7;8).

3.6 A Place of Resonance

The notion that presencing presents a withdrawal from presence (Hallward 2007:162) would mean that to be listening is not *à l’écoute* or *s’écouter*, but simply, *l’écoute*, without any indication of a subject, but for listening as such. In a “sonorous presence,” however, a subject returns to or refers back to its self as another subject and not as self-presence (Nancy 2007:8;12-16). The return or referral is the space of a self, and not presence to the self. Therefore, listening is a referring, and not a deferring. It is a referring back to itself, but to itself as other and not a withdrawal or a going back. Rather than a withdrawal, Nancy contemplates a place of resonance, where a body sends back waves of meaning.

This improves on Nancy's discussion in "Corpus," written between 1990-1992, about the impenetrability of bodies, "Two bodies can't occupy the same place simultaneously...I can't speak from where you listen, and you can't hear [listen] from where I speak..." (Nancy 2008b:57).¹¹⁹ In a place of resonance, a subject refers back meaning to its self as other, and not as two bodies. He thinks of the listening subject not as a subject, except as the place of resonance, where vibrations refer back meaning and resound. In his discussion of music in "Ascoltando," the "listening-subject," Nancy states, "is nothing else, or is no one else, but the music itself..." When a sonorous body listens to itself (*il s'écoute*), it makes itself listened to (Nancy 2008a:x;xiii).

In her exchange with Narcissus, Echo is a body that is sonorous for its self, resounding as she listens in the movement of resonance. Echo listens to herself (*elle s'écoute*), and by listening to herself, finds herself (*elle se trouve*), and by finding herself, deviates (*elle s'écarte*) from herself, in order to resound further away, listening to herself before hearing (understanding) herself (*elle s'entend*), and thus actually becoming her subject (Nancy 2007:35).¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Richard A. Rand translates *écouter* as 'hear'. *Mais je ne peux pas parler d'où vous écoutez, ni vous, écouter d'où je parle – ni chacun d'entre nous écouter d'où il parle (et se parle)* (Nancy 2008b:56).

¹²⁰ This is adapted from a section of Nancy's Listening in which he speaks about the music in the resonance of a text.

"...it is more profoundly the music in it, or the arch-music of that resonance where it *listens to itself* [*s'écoute*], by listening to itself *finds itself* [*se trouve*], and by finding itself *deviates* [*s'écarte*] from itself in order to resound further away, listening to itself before hearing/understanding itself, and thus actually becoming its "subject,"

A further imposition forces Echo to relinquish her body, after the temporary failure of her punishment” that Spivak refers to. Under Juno’s command, Echo becomes bodiless, but her curse is not her mere disembodiment or reduced vocality. Her punishment is to no longer be divided by any difference. She is neither speaker nor hearer, neither creator nor receiver. She gives no reply, as such. She returns the speech of the other intact, with no iteration of her own. Unable to call or to respond, to attend to the other, or even to attend to her self as other, she simply doubles the call of others, and thus, Echo’s ‘reply’ is no longer *her* reply, but the reflection of the call of the other. Echo’s disembodiment marks the end of her subject-position. She becomes, rather, a subject-less predicate, sounding vacantly. This disembodied Echo is a reverberation outside, and not the referral to herself that is Nancean resonance. With no *logos*, no subject, no listening capacity, and no body, Echo’s echoing is outside of the other, and inside of no body. Though not outside her body, Echo is beyond the bodily limit.

Hallward attributes non-relationality in French philosophy to a tendency to critique the Cartesian cogito, in which a subject is not in relation to an object. He insists that for Nancy, the subject can only exist “as non-subject...” (Hallward 2007:171). Nancy’s early work in the 1970s and 80s focused on the question of the subject.¹²¹ In his critique of the re-grounding of the subjective, in Ego Sum, Nancy deems suspicious any mention of the subject, which he argues ‘governs the world’ (James 2002:130) (Nancy 1979:125-127). Nancy believes

which is neither the same as nor other than the individual subject who writes the text.”

¹²¹ Ego Sum (Nancy 1979), and The Literary Absolute (Lacoue-Labarthe/Nancy 1988).

contemporary theoretical discourse, such as Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, that seeks to overturn the subject, merely re-grounds or persists in the grounding of the subject. Nancy breaks down Lacan's account of subjectivity via a critique of the Cartesian *cogito*. For Nancy, the self-grounding, self-positing subject that echoes nothing but itself resurfaces in Lacanian psychoanalysis (Nancy 1979:125-127).

In Listening, Nancy thinks better than to attempt to overturn the subject. In order to avoid re-grounding a self-positing subject, Nancy does not make listening into a subject-position. Where his earlier work discussed the subject as a self-positing image of itself, in Listening, Nancy considers who is listening as the place of resonance. Nancy *places* resonance in order to avoid creating a subject detached from an object or a subject present to itself. By referring back waves of meaning to itself as other, the place of resonance or sonorous body makes its self listened to and it listens to itself as other.

Thinking outside or beyond subjectivity, Nancy states in The Inoperative Community, "The subject cannot be outside itself" (Nancy 1991:24). In his 1994 lecture, "On the Soul," he formulates a challenge to the Cartesian split between mind, *res cogitans*, and body, *res extensa*. Nancy aims to think of sensing ourselves being outside, exposed, extended. "A 'self-sensing' that is exactly not a being posed by oneself and an appropriating of oneself to oneself in a pure interiority, but a being in exteriority in relation to itself." He says, "The *res cogitans* is a body." The body is not a subject, but through self-sensing, an 'outside-the-self' that is pure extension touches an 'inside-the-self' that is pure cogitation. Nancy drops Cartesian dualism, thinking rather of "the unity of being

outside the self.” Self-sensing, self-touching senses otherness and is sensed by the other because it always involves passing through the outside. In Corpus, Nancy names this experience ‘soul’ (Nancy 2008b:131-134).

Resonance is the term Nancy uses for this in Listening (2007). He envisions a place of resonance where vibrations resound as their natural frequencies are combined with other vibrations. A sonorous body, such as the lyre or the violin is a place of resonance. The disembodied Echo, however, has no place to resound or to combine vibrations. She is an edge that cannot open or expose bodily limit because she no longer has a body. She is reduced to a surface that reflects the vibrations of a subject and nothing else.

Although the Echo fable in Greek and Latin mythology and the Tramp figure in silent Chaplin films contain elements very different from one another, both recall Nancy’s questioning of the ground of subjectivity. The Tramp cannot have consciousness because he is a mere film figure, a two-dimensional figure whose image is projected on a screen, whereas Chaplin, in contrast, is a thinking, fleshy, human body. The Tramp can be a sonorous body in the world of the film. Chaplin is a listening body that resounds as it listens. Nancy explains bodies have *timbre*, stretched over a “column of resonance,” like a drum skin (Nancy 2007:42). In this way, the body is a resonance chamber. Thinking of Chaplin as a resonance chamber, his intensified or stretched movements vibrate to create *timbre*. Nancy takes up the percussion metaphor again in “Ascoltando,” when he writes about a sonorous body being “struck” and returning the blow “from itself to itself” with the striking blow’s very vibration. The body is struck, returned, and understood (*entendu*), making itself understood (*se fait entendre*), and thus,

listening to itself (*il s'écoute*) (Nancy 2008a:x).

3.7 Intension and Attention

Chaplin's *s'écouter* is particularly evident when we see the Tramp acting out a silent dialogue with objects, such as, the scene in *The Gold Rush* discussed in Chapter Two. In *The Gold Rush*, Chaplin's facial expressions lead a dance with his hands and two feet made of forked bread. A similar scene to this is the section of *Modern Times* (Chaplin 1936) in which the Tramp, working on a factory assembly line is screwing in nuts and bolts. As the line speeds up, the Tramp tightens the nuts at an increasing rate until it drives him mad, using the wrenches to 'tighten' everything else in his path. In a deleted scene from *City Lights* (Chaplin 1931), the Tramp saunters around beside a shop window front on a busy street corner, unnoticed by scores of passersby. Standing over a metal grating in the sidewalk, the Tramp's attention is caught by a small plank of wood wedged between the bars of the grating. The Tramp tries to free the wood with his stick and his foot, but the wood will not come loose. It just flips over between the bars. He stamps down hard, determined to free the wood. He slips while doing this and anxiously lifts his hat, raises his eyebrows disapprovingly and looks around to see if anyone is watching. Then he adjusts his tattered gloves. As he returns to the task of poking the wood through, some people gather around him. They watch the Tramp, who is lost in his work of stabbing and kicking at the grating, until he looks up and sighs heavily. Finally, after getting the thing to go through, he tips his hat to a policeman and calmly walks away. Chaplin's movements of adjusting and gesturing with his costume are intensified by the Tramp's constant attempt to remain the composed, serious, little gentleman, despite his undignified situation. Chaplin, through these movements and gestures

of striving for dignity, makes himself listened to.

I discussed in Chapter Two how Chaplin uses the hat dialogue to humanise the Tramp. Chaplin knows it is humorous to see a character in an undignified situation attempting to maintain dignity (Chaplin 1918:134-137). I argued in Chapter Two that every effort to recoup his hat is an attempt to regain his dignity. Through this dialogue with the audience via the hat, Chaplin expresses a voice that is his own but as other. Before hearing (understanding) himself (*s'entend*), he refers back to himself, listening to himself as other. His movement is *s'écouter* in that he listens to himself resounding as a sonorous body. He listens to a self as he listens “to a world that are both in resonance” (Nancy 2007:43).

To say this is not to “put ears before understanding.”¹²² As I established in Chapter One, to simply hear one’s self speak is not listening. *L’entente* and *l’écoute* are two tensions. *L’écoute* is an attention toward a tension. The tension of *l’entente* is an intention, directed to a subject or inward to a self. *L’écoute* is an attention to the tension of an intention to a self (*l’entente*). *L’écoute* is an attention to self, once removed. It is attention to self as other. The movement of *l’écoute* is resonance. *L’entente*, which does not employ the amplification, extension, or turning back of resonance is the harmony or agreement of “a *consonant* without resonance.” *L’entente* is understanding without the referring back of meaning (Nancy 2007:35).

¹²² Plato (Republic 531b).

3.8 The Pervert's Guide to Silent Cinema: Žižek's Critique of Chaplin

Chaplin, via the Tramp, relates through the world of the film. In this case, by interacting with the screen props mentioned above. According to Žižek, however, in his analysis of *The Great Dictator* (Chaplin 1940), Chaplin lacks a certain relation to the actual world. Žižek claims that Chaplin's role, as the Jewish barber is representative of the silent cinema as a whole. He explains this is because the character lacks innocence, depth or guilt. He claims that characters from the silent film era lack finitude, morality, evil and guilt. "They don't know death; they don't know sexuality even; they don't know suffering..." (Žižek 2006).¹²³ In contrast, the role of the dictator, Žižek believes, represents the talkies, which do have depth, guilt, and culpability.

Žižek's argument is unsupported. The claim that films do not have depth, guilt, or culpability until the talkies arrive is simple romanticism.¹²⁴ Film characters of the 1920s were hardly innocent. *Way Down East* by D.W. Griffith, for instance (Griffith 1920) is a tragic story and social commentary. A poor young woman is seduced into a sham marriage. The husband leaves her after she becomes pregnant. The baby dies, leaving the woman no choice but to move away and change her name. She tries to start a new life, protecting the secrets of her past. In a tragic ending, she is swept away in a winter storm.

¹²³ *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema*, 2006. Directed by Fiennes, S. UK: P Guide.

¹²⁴ In the Adorno-Benjamin debate in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin's political theory of mass art and audience consumption in his 1936 essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (Benjamin 1969:217-251) claims that mechanical reproduction of art (films) has a liberating effect on the audience. Adorno, in his critique of Benjamin's essay, calls this "simple romanticism" (Adorno 1938:288-317).

The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari (Wiene 1920) tells the tale of a mad doctor that controls a somnambulist to carry out murders. The first episode in Fritz Lang's Doctor Mabuse series, *Doctor Mabuse – The Gambler* (Lang 1922) is a crime thriller set in the underworld of post World War I Berlin. Doctor Mabuse uses hypnosis to murder the rich and take their money. Murnau's *Sunrise* (Murnau 1927) is a story of murder and repentance, in which a man is coaxed by an adulteress to murder his wife, but he cannot go through with it. *Strike* (Eisenstein 1924), depicts a strike in a metalworks factory in Czarist Russia. The workers' protest against harsh working conditions is brought to a bloody end when the military are brought in to end the strike.

There are countless examples of stories, characters and plots from the silent era that do not lack depth, guilt, and culpability - *Metropolis* (Lang 1927), *Greed* (von Stroheim 1924), *L'Argent* (L'Herbier 1928) and *Pandora's Box* (Pabst 1929), to name a few more. Žižek omits from his discussion, the films of D.W. Griffith, whose characters confront moral issues. As Heather Stewart explains, "Even before the great epics of *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *Intolerance* (1916), his Biograph films are the twentieth century equivalent of the great medieval morality tales." The many one-reelers he made in his Biograph years "explored the problems thrown up by traditional country values meeting the new urban and industrial challenges" (Stewart 1996:95). As mentioned in Chapter Two, *Those Awful Hats* (1909), which focuses on the main characters' guilt and culpability and *The New York Hat* (1912) are two early examples. The most striking cases in point are *The Birth of a Nation* and *Intolerance*. *Intolerance*, the follow-up to *The Birth of a Nation*, or by its full title, *Intolerance: Love's Struggle Throughout the Ages* tells several stories not lacking depth, finitude,

morality, evil, guilt, death, culpability, sexuality or suffering (Žižek 2006).¹²⁵

These include, the fall of Babylon, the Crucifixion of Jesus, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre, and modern organised crime. Griffith's stories, characters and plots were far from innocent.

What these films cannot claim to have is Chaplin's audience connection. The audience is as much an interrelated part of the film as is the Tramp. Unlike Gance, who connects his own period to a certain point or figure in history in his films, Chaplin connects the audience to the gag by way of his resonance between *l'écoute* and *l'entente*. Žižek's theory about silent cinema characters is not supported. The slapstick of silent comedians does not even fit Žižek's oversimplified model. "Much of Chaplin's comedy is based upon adversity and tragedy, a legacy of his childhood and, in no small part, the often macabre humour of his native Britain" (Mitchell 1997:251). While Chaplin was not the only director of the silent era to directly address poverty, he was unique among silent comedy filmmakers for the depth and complexity of his later silent films. Chaplin confronted topics such as poverty, hunger, unemployment, slums, homelessness, and the underlying theme of dignity. Although Chaplin's later silent films, which have more developed plot structures, such as *City Lights* (1931), also challenge Žižek's assertions about silent cinema, so too do some of Chaplin's early films. One early example of depth, guilt, or culpability in Chaplin's comedies is *Easy Street* (1917). As was later seen in *The Kid* (1922),

¹²⁵ *The Pervert's Guide to Cinema*, 2006. Directed by Fiennes, S. UK: P Guide.

Easy Street is a film modelled on the London streets where Chaplin lived as a child, amidst poverty, violence, and crime.

The Kid's first title card, "A picture with a smile and perhaps a tear" warns the viewer to expect some tragedy mixed with comedy. The film begins when a poor, unwed mother abandons her child, placing him in the back seat of a limousine, in hope that a rich person will better care for the child. She leaves a note with the baby saying 'please take care of this orphan child'. She does not know that she has placed the child in a stolen car. Two thieves who have taken the car are so surprised to discover a baby in the back seat that they nearly shoot the child, deciding instead to leave him on the ground in a back alley. We next see the mother, alone, weeping, ridden with guilt. We also are shown the father of the child at home holding a photo of the mother. The photo accidentally falls into the fireplace and the man leaves it to burn.

Meanwhile, the Tramp discovers the baby in the alley. Disinterested, he tries to pass the baby off to someone else. A series of shots show the Tramp trying and failing to abandon the abandoned baby he has found. Unable to find anyone who will take it, he contemplates leaving the baby in a sewer. It is only when he finds and reads the mother's note that he changes his mind and finally decides to adopt the child. The mother, overcome with guilt, arrives at the father's house and collapses on his doorstep. Time passes and the woman becomes a successful stage performer, but always regrets giving up the kid. She does charity work in her spare time to help children in the slums. Now five years old, the kid is well cared for by the Tramp who treats him like a son. The kid is getting an education from the Tramp in street fighting and running from policemen. The authorities

try to take the kid away, and the Tramp fights hard to get the kid back. After the mother discovers and reunites with the kid and brings him home with her, she invites the Tramp into her home.

3.9 The Peculiarity of the Tramp

The Kid example shows us how Chaplin as a sonorous presence is always already a relation to others. The Tramp character is not a place where Chaplin makes himself simply understood or heard as a subject. The Tramp is a place of resonance that becomes a subject only in that Chaplin resounds there. Chaplin resounds, referring back to himself, with a call to his self. "...The subject of listening is always...called by itself..." (Nancy 2007:17;20-22). He and audience are connected, yet there is dissymmetry in their movement. Chaplin's resonance then could be a movement between a call and a response. Nancean resonance articulates this relationship of call and response between what has come and what will come. Chaplin's call to the audience beckons a response. This does not occur by separation, but rather, with their interrelationship. He does not refer to the audience as himself. He refers back to himself as other, while the audience as a player in the film is other, but also is not an object. This means that Chaplin and audience are not identical, nor is the audience other. Moving in resonance, Chaplin makes the subject as other as he refers back to himself as other.

Audience identification is not unusual for stage performers and audiences. Not only is it the nature of film and drama to evoke audience response and emotional identification, but it is also the case for musical and fine artists. I have discussed here as well as in Chapters One and Two, Gilroy's theory of the "ethics of antiphony." What is so singular about Chaplin is not his capacity for audience

identification, but the novel way in which he accomplished this. Dialogue, singing and interaction with the audience, were key components in the English music halls where Chaplin worked in his youth. In the music halls, performers directly addressed and engaged with the audience (Scheide 2006:117). Syd Chaplin, for instance continued to impress audiences for many years in the English music halls, especially while employed in Fred Karno's troupe of actors. Syd Chaplin had perfected the art of the music hall comedian. Yet, unlike his older brother, Charlie Chaplin took this technique further, bringing his remarkable pantomime skills to merge with an approach that exploited this intersubjectivity to a new extent. The Tramp character developed out of a favourite peculiarity of Chaplin's. He drew on this from one source - a man's striving for dignity in any number of undignified situations. I will elaborate on how this striving for dignity works in Chapter Six. Effectively, Chaplin uses the striving for dignity to build his gags on.

Although the Tramp finds himself in the most undignified of situations, he constantly strives to regain this dignity. Chaplin exploits this irony and creates a special connection with his audience. They are connected, yet they are still separated. This works because Chaplin's self refers to itself as other. This method takes his music hall style of pantomime comedy to another level in which he manages to refer to his self as other. This, as I will show in this thesis, is a very lucrative technique for making people laugh.

3.10 Nancy's Response to Hallward's Criticism

Nancy's theory of resonance in Listening responds to Hallward's criticism that Nancy's work is a non-foundation and lacks any relation to the past. The

movement of resonance is not the coming-to-be or movement of presence from a subject to itself because, as in the case of Chaplin, it is his referring back or back-turning motion (*rebroussement*) toward a self as other that inhibits immediate self-presence. This pre-empts Hallward's critique in "Jean-Luc Nancy and the Implosion of Thought" that Nancy's philosophy is based on a non-relation with no relation to what has come or to what will come. In stating that the subject "can only present what interrupts or is other than itself," Hallward insinuates that listening is a constant deferring, the subject of which can only exist as non-subject (Hallward 2007:160-161;171-172).

A disembodied Echo has no place of resonance. This leaves her with no place for referring meaning back to herself. Without any space for referral, Echo cannot be a listening body that resounds as she listens. Her body is not a non-subject, as Hallward would claim in his critique of Nancy. She wants to refer to her self-as-other as relation. Chaplin as well refers and does not defer with a self-as-other relation. He does not only present what interrupts or is other than himself because he refers to himself as other. He cannot be a non-relation because his referring to himself as other is without immediate self-presence. *L'écoute*, through the amplifying and extending movement of resonance, makes its subject as other or its subject other. Nancy considers the listener as a place of resonance in which a sonorous body refers back to itself as other and is neither a withdrawal nor a self-presence. Chaplin, as a place of resonance, moves toward a tension (*l'écoute*) and toward a subject (*l'entente*).

Nancy, in answering Hallward's claim that his philosophy is based on a non-relation, argues philosophy listens as a place of resonance. Philosophy listens as

l'écoute, in the way that Chaplin does. Resonance, as a spacing movement, is an active mediation between *l'écoute* and *l'entente* and not a connection or separation of the two. The place of resonance does not only present what interrupts or separates as Hallward argues the Nancean subject does. *L'écoute* and *l'entente* are in a diunital relation, involving immediacy and a break with immediacy not dissociable in the movement of resonance.

In the next chapter, I will continue to explore the question of listening with reference to Chaplin, asking, can philosophy, as a place of resonance, listen as *l'écoute*? I will also describe in the next chapter, how Nancy turns around Derrida's critique of his theory of touching, which Derrida calls 'haptocentrism', a bias in which touch is a centre or moment of presence.

Chapter Four: What happens when the Tramp speaks

Previous chapters of this thesis have discussed questions regarding privileged types of speech and listening, as well as logocentric thinking, a privileging of word. One of my themes has been that logocentric thinking assumes speaker and listener are present to each other in time and space, leaving no distance between them. Derrida's On Touching – Jean-Luc Nancy (Derrida 2005a) is a deconstruction of haptocentrism, a privileging of the figure of touch, which Derrida proposes forms a pattern in many traditions of thought. Haptocentric thinking deems touch as a centre or moment of presence. The whole tradition of European philosophy, Derrida argues, privileges this haptology or figure of touch, which is based in Christian theology (Derrida 2005a:243). As Derrida deems logocentrism a bias in the tradition of a metaphysics of presence where word is primary, it follows that in the metaphysics of presence of touching, touch is primary. This haptocentrism is in the same vein as logocentrism and phonocentrism, whose chief similarity is the hearing of oneself as one speaks, in which there is absolute proximity of word or voice and being.

In a move similar to Hallward's in his critique that Nancy offers no relation or mediation between a presenting and the thing that is presented, except from itself, Derrida questions the possibility of immediacy between touching and what is touched. This implies unity, immediacy and continuity between touching and the touched, despite Nancy's claim to think of touch as fragmented and discontinuous (Derrida 2005a:156):

“Nancy seems to break away from haptocentrist metaphysics, or at least to distance himself from it. His discourse about touch is neither intuitionistic nor continuistic, homogenistic, or indivisibilistic. What it first recalls is

sharing, parting, partitioning, and discontinuity, interruption, caesura - in a word, syncope.

Nancy wants a touching that is independent from haptocentrist metaphysics, “part of the great tradition that accords an absolute privilege to touch and does not let itself be encroached upon by the possibility...of any vicariousness of the senses” (Derrida 2005a:41). This contact through interruption is for Derrida, manifested in a self-touching auto-affection that interrupts itself as itself. In this way, touch is not only contact; it is also non-contact. I will next explore Derrida’s attempt to theorize a touching as hetero-affection with his phrase, *se toucher toi*.

4.1 *Se Toucher Toi*: Dissymmetry and Connection

Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s discussion of touch in his later work, *Le Visible et L’Invisible* (Merleau-Ponty 1964) is very different from Nancy’s, nor does he share with Derrida the notion of touch as immediate proximity (Derrida 2005a:244-245) (Watkin 2009:15). Derrida argues Nancy’s view of touching might be comparable to Merleau-Ponty’s touch as separation, discontinuity, and rupture. Merleau-Ponty implies direct contact with the self, “To touch is to touch oneself” (Merleau-Ponty 1968:255). Chris Watkin discusses Merleau-Ponty’s negation of the difference between self and other as “an alterity very much less ‘other’ than Derrida would like.” Merleau-Ponty maintains a lack of difference between touching one’s own hand and touching the hand of another (Watkin 2009:15;45). Levinas disagrees with Merleau-Ponty on this point about reversibility between self and other that reversibility can extend to another body (Reynolds 2004:134).

Jack Reynolds, objecting to Levinas' critique, asserts Merleau-Ponty does not, in fact say that touching one's own hand is exactly the same as shaking another's hand. Reynolds claims that touching one's own hand and touching the hand of another implies the intertwining of self and other. Self and other are interdependent, but not "reduced to each other" (Reynolds 2004:134). Reynolds holds that Merleau-Ponty's later work is not a return to the immediate presence-to-self. He refers to a non-dualistic divergence (*écart*) in which the components of would-be dualisms are intertwined. Reynolds offers a reading of Merleau-Ponty's work on touching that considers wrong Derrida's claim that touching is a metaphysics of presence by asserting touching is a non-dualistic difference between self and other (Reynolds 2004:57-58). For Reynolds, there is a difference, and not a dualism, and thus not a metaphysics of presence, as Derrida would have it (Reynolds 2004:57-58).

This is more in line with Levinas' stance on touching. Levinas, like Reynolds, considers self and other in touching to be different and interdependent. Levinas' later work, Ziarek explains departs from Totality and Infinity (Levinas 1980), in which he discusses touch as caress. The caress in Totality and Infinity refers to erotic love and to sensibility as enjoyment (Ziarek 2001:82). Whereas in Totality and Infinity, the caress "overwhelms the relation of the I with itself and with the non-I...and loses its position as a subject" (Levinas 1980:259), in Otherwise Than Being, Levinas sees ethical responsibility in incarnation (Ziarek 2001:79). In Otherwise Than Being, language is contact and is already incarnation. Language is not separable from the body (Ziarek 2001:83). The embodied self takes responsibility for the other. This connects with Levinas' theory of discourse, in which responsibility is a relationship with alterity (Lingis

1981:xiii). As Luce Irigaray summarises, “...this memory of the flesh as the place of approach means ethical fidelity to incarnation. To destroy it is to risk the suppression of alterity...” (Irigaray 2001:142). Thus, alterity is indissociable to the ethical experience.

Derrida gives a discussion that further complicates Merleau-Ponty’s work on touching (Derrida 2005a:189):

Merleau-Ponty’s major concern is not only the ‘reflexive’ access to the ‘incarnation’ of ‘my body’, in this first allusion to the touching-touched of the hand; it is also and immediately to involve the other, and my experience of the other’s body or the ‘other man’s’ – the other as other human being – in the being touched of my own proper hand that is touching.

In this reading, Merleau-Ponty is not proposing reversibility, but that touching an other involves also touching oneself. Reynolds, recalling a non-dualistic divergence or *écart*, suggests a touching in which the intertwining of self and other is not immediate presence. This intertwining maintains a difference between self and other, and yet, they do not constitute a duality. The separation of touch at work in Merleau-Ponty’s discussion that Derrida talks about occurs in the background. James explains this “background of discontinuity” is the flesh (James 2006:130). The discontinuity is not a distinction of identity or dissymmetry of self and other, but a distinction of the relation and contact of touch (O’Connor 2010:35-36). Reynolds sees a “chiasmic relationship” in which subject and other are intertwined and interdependent. This means rather than a dualism, there is a gap or a difference between subject and other, and thus not a

metaphysics of presence (Reynolds 2004:58;133).

While Reynolds' reading of Merleau-Ponty agrees with Nancy that touching is outside of or in excess of a haptocentric tradition, Derrida argues, touching is a self-interrupting contact that is more of a self-touching (*se toucher*) that adheres to a haptocentric tradition indicating continuity, unity and immediacy (Derrida 2005a:38):

...It is a certain way of self-touching without touching, or touching oneself and interrupting the contact, but a contact, a tactility, that nevertheless *succeeds in interrupting itself*. It succeeds in setting up contact, in setting itself up *as* contact, in thus touching itself *in interrupting itself*, at the moment when it's suspending - or even forbidding or abstaining - itself, to such a point that it's holding its breath, so as to give itself, still, within the syncope, the pleasure of which it is depriving itself.

The material, proximate, relational contact is broken by a non-contact in which a self interrupts itself as itself and not as some other. This special type of interruption, Derrida claims, is actually a unity and continuity perpetuated in auto-affection. Therefore, Nancy's questioning of touch is a certain loyalty to the very tradition of haptocentrism that he distances himself from (James 2006a:120;130) (Derrida 2005a:128). Derrida asserts that Nancy bases his figure of touch on Christian theology, which emphasises the distance and discontinuity between touch and touched. Derrida's idea of touching has temporal and spatial difference and is not auto-affection. In this chapter, I will question the separation and difference that Derrida emphasises in his critique of haptocentrism. For instance, he uses the phrase, *se toucher toi* not as a reflexive gesture, but as a

phrase of unity and dissymmetry that also has transitivity.

If touching is grounded in theology as Derrida says, then Nancy's work on the body and on touching relies on a 'haptological metaphysics,' a metaphysics of presence, suggesting immediacy between a touching and that which is touched. Citing a Thomas Aquinas reference that "christianizes this haptologies," 'spiritual touching' in Christianity is immediate, Derrida explains, "It is no longer simply flesh, but spirit already; it is no longer temporal or potential, but eternal..." Despite its immediacy, spiritual touching also has transitivity, however, it is such that it "becomes what it touches and as it touches" (Derrida 2005a:247).

Watkin questions if immediate presence is required by Merleau-Ponty's ontology that vexes Derrida. Merleau-Ponty avoids "dualistic incarnation," Watkin claims, by way of relating visible and invisible (Watkin 2009:15-16). Derrida also cites Merleau-Ponty's treatment of the reversibility of vision and touch, "The untouchable is not a possible...tangible, not any more than the invisible, as we recall, is 'an *other visible* 'possible', or a 'possible' visible for an other'." Touching cannot be touched, thus making it untouchable. Merleau-Ponty equates the untouchable with vision's invisibility (Derrida 2005a:213).

The difficulty of presence in the figure of touch (James 2006b:47) is that just as sense does not sense itself, for Derrida, 'touching' touches on the "untouchable." Thus, touching is both touchable and untouchable – it is an "untouchable touchable" (Derrida 2005a:113). He points to the double meaning of the phrase, *il se touche*, due to its variable reflexivity and reciprocity. In *il se touche*, the phrase could either mean, he/it self-touches it/himself or, it/he is touchable by an

other (Derrida 2005a:6;18;34). The untranslatable original title of the text, *Le Toucher*, *Jean-Luc Nancy* (Derrida 2000), has a double meaning. *Le toucher* means both ‘touch’ and ‘to touch him’. *Se toucher*, however, is more complex. Translator Christine Irizarry explains *se toucher* can work in either reflexive or reciprocal modes (Irizarry 2005:317-318). It “can turn the subject toward itself...or toward the other, according to a reciprocity that is easier to say than to attain” (Derrida 1993:152) (Derrida 2005a:108). In short, this grammatical aspect “puts transitivity in reflexivity” (Derrida 2005a:291).

Touching for Derrida is not a problem of reflexivity, but of symmetry. Citing Jean-Louis Chrétien, who “disymmetrizes” this reflexivity and reverses the origin of self-touching (Chrétien 2004:109), he attempts a similar dissymmetry with a new phrase. He introduces - *se toucher toi*, which has two meanings, ‘self-touching-you’ and ‘to self-touch you’ (Derrida 2005a:34). In *se toucher toi*, touching is in contact with oneself as well as with the other. In order to be touched this way, “I have to touch *myself*.” “When I speak to you, I touch you, and you touch me when I hear you, from however far off it comes to me...” (Derrida 2005a:115;291). Derrida sees the ‘self’ and the ‘you’ as equally “indispensable,” suggesting connection rather than rupture or separation (Derrida 2005a:291).

This referral to the self and to ‘you’ is similar to the expression, ‘I and I’ in Rastafarian¹²⁶ language, in which ‘I and I’ replaces ‘you and me’, ‘us’ or ‘we’.

¹²⁶ Rastafarians are guided by the culture and traditions of Ethiopia. The old testament of the Bible shows a connection with Africa, mentioning Egypt many times, as well as Ethiopia. In Psalm 68:31, for instance, ‘Princes shall come out

‘I-and-I’ (or ‘I-an-I’) is a self-reflexive usage of a first-person subject pronoun (McFarlane 1998:107). In Jamaican patois, ‘me’ or ‘mi’ is used as both object and subject. In Rastafarian language, this means people think of themselves as objects. Rastafarians, however, use ‘I-and-I’ as a subject “even when the sentence calls for an object...to indicate that all people are active, creative agents and not passive objects” (Edmonds 1998:33).

‘I and I’ represents the “oneness of two persons” according to E.E. Cashmore, but also the oneness of god and all people:

One of the underlying tenets of Rastafarian philosophy had always been that no person has any privilege, power or special religious virtuosity: all are totally equal in ‘human truths and rights’.... The expression ‘I and I’ captures this: it means that dualities such as ‘you and I’ are absurd and that all men are equal and bound by the spirit of ‘jah’ or god (Cashmore 1984:6).

In this way, ‘I’ and ‘I’ are equally indispensable, but are not the same, and not in symmetry. In Chapter Two, I discussed the dissymmetry of call and response discourse, thus exposing *logos* as not at the centre of speech and discourse, and not immediately present because of the difference in speaker and listener. Here, ‘I and I’ refers to two different people, together in dissymmetry.

of Egypt: Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God’ (Cashmore 1984:9).

Derrida sees unity and dissymmetry in *se toucher toi*, where the ‘you’ and the ‘self’ are not interchangeable (Derrida 2005a:281). It is important, Derrida tells us, that the ‘self’ does not “borrow” from the ‘you’, in a reflexive gesture. *Se toucher toi* cannot work in reflexive mode as *se toucher* does. To do so would be to split the self into two selves. In other words, an attempt to form a reflexive version of *se toucher toi* would produce, ‘to self-touch yourself’ or ‘self-touching yourself’.

The non-reflexive basis of *se toucher toi* might provide a different expression of Chaplin’s interaction with himself as other. I have so far discussed this interaction as *s’écouter*. *S’écouter* could denote a self-reflexivity that implies an interior dialogue between Chaplin and himself. An inner dialogue would imply a split or separation of the self. Chaplin’s dialogue, however, does not occur by means of a splitting of his Tramp self into a self and ‘my other self’. Alternatively, Chaplin’s self is in dialogue not with another self, but instead, with a ‘you’. This reveals a self that is as crucial as ‘you’. Derrida explains, the ‘you’ in *se toucher toi* is not susceptible to a relation to self or to self-touching. While the self and the ‘you’ remain balanced in *se toucher toi* the phrase conveys dissymmetry by maintaining first and second person pronouns. ‘You’ stays in the second person and does not change to the first person (Derrida 2005a:281;282) as it does with ‘I and I’.

Chrétien believes touching or self-touching is only touching if it always touches something other than the self that touches (Chrétien 2004:119). “The touching cannot be the same as the touched even when the touching touches *itself*. Then some other is in itself” (Derrida 2005a:245-246). Some other in Chaplin’s self is

not an object, not a 'me'. Similarly, 'I and I' replaces the 'me' in 'you and me' with another 'I', so as not to objectify the 'me'. It also renames the 'you' 'I', making the two pronouns subjects with the same name, and thus, sustaining the impossibility of any hierarchy. The phrase, 'I and I' suits Chaplin's self-dialogue because it does not separate the self and the non-self as subject and object. 'I and I' refers to a self and a 'you' who are explicitly not objects. Whereas *se toucher toi* has two subjects and potentially, two corresponding built-in objects, 'I and I' has two or more subjects and no implicit object. The self is not detached, but connected. The self and the 'you' are linked as 'subjects'.

Se toucher toi shares a commonality with the back-turning or referring back movement that vibrations undergo when a sonorous body resounds. As seen in the reading of the Heraclitus Fragment B51, in Chapter Two of this thesis, the back-turning movement or *palintropos* is the coming together of a change in direction. *Se toucher toi*, in a similar motion to the oscillation of resonance, goes back and forth between the self and the 'you'. "When I speak to you, I touch you." "You touch me when I hear you" (Derrida 2005a:291).

This supports the argument that self and 'you' are not opposed, but linked. If the self were split, it would undermine the movement of resonance because a divided self, as subject and object, prevents the referring back of resonance. Resonance is not a simple reflection of waves, but an intensifying motion that begins inside a body and moves outside. Resonance vibrations increase in duration by way of referring and turning back on themselves. For Nancy, the self is a referral. In listening, a subject occurs in the space or resonance of the referral. It touches its self. This is why Nancy calls the subject the part of the body that is listening as a

means of approaching the self (Nancy 2007:8-13).

4.2 Immediacy Without Presence

4.2.1 Everyone Is Listening

Chaplin's self does not turn into an object to be manipulated or controlled. He creates harmony in bringing his self to the world of the film,¹²⁷ which includes the Chaplin film audience. Chaplin developed this technique in the English music halls, where he performed as a pantomime artist. Music hall artists directly addressed the members of the audience, "thereby making them vocal partners in the performance" (Scheide 2006:117). Regardless of the distance between an audience and the stage, music hall artists conducted an intimate dialogue with the audience, encouraging interaction and communal singing, and aiming for what Paul Gilroy argues is the moment when an audience identifies with a performer, blurring the line between audience and performer. Gilroy describes an "ethics of antiphony," in which the performer becomes connected with the audience, establishing a relationship of identity (Gilroy 1993b:138) (Gilroy 1993a:200) (Gilroy 2004:94). Gilroy's theory is not a reduction in which all players are the same. Performer and audience are not identical in this scenario. This antiphony maintains space between voices that are nonetheless connected. As Smitherman surmises of call and response, "Virtually everyone is performing and everyone is

¹²⁷ This could be expressed as 'umwelt', in the non-Heideggerian sense of the term. In the discipline of biosemiotics, 'umwelt' means "the self-centered world of an organism" (Cobley 2010:348). It refers to an animal's relationship with its environment. Heidegger's *Umwelt* refers to the world around us, or one's immediate surroundings within a larger *Welt*. *Mitwelt*, on the other hand, is the world shared with others (Inwood 1999:129).

listening' (Smitherman 1977:108).

This method that results in identification not only resembles, but also shares a kinship with the poetic mode in oral traditions.¹²⁸ In a 1921 interview (Parsons 1921), Chaplin states an affinity for poetry, "I am eager to bring poetry to the screen such as we have never had. My experiment with 'The Kid' taught me there is a limitless field for the expression of poetry through the motion pictures."¹²⁹ Here, Chaplin is talking about the active and participatory role of 1920s film audiences. Chaplin not only knew what people laugh at, but with *The Kid*, he began to explore and expand his audience's potential to emotionally identify with the characters and the plot.

As I discussed with Gilroy's theory of antiphony here and in Chapter Two, a relationship of *identity* does not mean that speaker and listener are *identical*. Chaplin and audience are connected in this special identification, though through their attending to and answering the other as call and response, they share difference. This difference in time and space of their mutual interaction maintains openness to the other. This keeps speaker and listener separated.

¹²⁸ Eric Havelock's study, *Preface to Plato* (Havelock 1963), outlines the poetic mode found in pre-Platonic Greece, in which the audience's function is not one of passive acceptance of the artist's work, rather, the audience has an active and participatory role. The audience emotionally identifies with the characters and the plot (Havelock 1963:160;164).

¹²⁹ Interview with [Charlie Chaplin](#), by Louella Parsons, September 4, 1921, originally published in the *New York Telegraph*

http://www.clown-ministry.com/index_1.php/articles/the_real_charlie_chaplin_louella_parsons_interview/

For Chaplin, however, his self as other is connected with the ‘you’ of the audience. His self refers to itself as other by way of a striving for dignity (despite an undignified situation). This is what Chaplin does that makes people laugh and it is what makes him unique as a performer.

To illustrate how identification with the audience is primary for Chaplin, I will now turn to his 1967 talkie, *The Countess from Hong Kong* (Chaplin 1967), starring Sophia Loren as Natascha. In this film, Loren plays the Tramp. She stows away on a ship from Hong Kong to America as a means of escape “from despair, hopelessness, no future, nothing to look forward to but dancehalls and prostitution” (Chaplin 1967). Determined never to return to Hong Kong where she would surely perish, Natascha risks deportation and arrest by stowing away in the cabin of Marlon Brando. Brando, a diplomat and son of an oil baron, is her unwitting host for the voyage, as she has, unbeknownst to him, hidden in his closet. In a scene where Brando’s wife, played by Tippi Hedron, who has arrived on board the ship, exposes the truth that Loren is actually the former mistress of a gangster who sheltered her as an orphan in Shanghai, Brando retorts, “I wonder what *your* fate would have been if you had been in similar circumstances.” In this talkie, Brando delivers the message in a single terse sentence, asking Hedron and the audience to identify with Natascha’s character, as he does. Chaplin’s silent films, however, are steeped in the very message that Brando pronounces verbally. Through his speechless poetic mode, most of Chaplin’s silent films deliver Brando’s line.

Chaplin is intimately involved with all of the actors and elements in his films, and not detached emotionally from the situations, objects, and characters in the

film, as is Keaton. Emotional distance is the *sine qua non* to Keaton's deadpan humour and virtuosic agility. Chapter Two discussed the 'concrete irrationality' (Knopf 1999:112) that Dalí uses to describe Keaton's relationship to objects. Keaton does not form a dialogue with objects as Chaplin does. He creates distance and thereby does not invite the audience to identify with his character. James Agee wrote about Keaton's "melancholia" mixed with deadpan character:

He was by his whole style and nature so much the most deeply "silent" of the silent comedians that even a smile was as deafeningly out of key as a yell. In a way his pictures are like a transcendent juggling act in which it seems that the whole universe is in exquisite flying motion and the one point of repose is the juggler's effortless, uninterested face (Agee 1949:63).¹³⁰

In order to perform all of his own stunts and falls, as he does with heroic precision, Keaton stands apart from objects and characters. He contradicts them and their environment. He must reduce the universe of the film to mere matter in order for his ingenious mechanical gags to work. In this way, Keaton controls the world of the film and does not identify with it as Chaplin does.

Chaplin does not master or control objects in what Raymond Durgnat refers to as 'Chaplin's comedy of the misplaced soul' (Robinson 1984:172). Durgnat writes, 'The mainspring of Chapin's genius is, in a sense, the spiritual vividness which

¹³⁰ James Agee in "The last fade-out on the Great Stone Face: Buster Keaton" in *LIFE* magazine (11 February 1966), p. 63.

he gives to the basic, undignified physical things, fleas, feet, sausages' (Robinson 1984:172). In Chaplin's films, objects give form to spirit, and he uses objects to identify with the audience. I have, in Chapter Two, examined how Chaplin approaches a hat or a pair of bread rolls to participate with. In these examples, Chaplin brings objects to life through a voice that then expresses the figures that the objects become.

This is taken to an extreme in *Modern Times*, when the feeding machine first alters the factory worker Tramp's behaviour, and then drives him temporarily mad. The feeding machine is introduced to the factory president for the purpose of eliminating the lunch hour and increasing production. During a demonstration of the machine to which the Tramp is subjected, the feeding machine hyper-functions and effectively throws several plates of food onto the Tramp's face and lap, rather than feeding it to him. The factory president deems the machine "impractical" and the Tramp is sent back to his post on the assembly line. After his messy encounter with the feeding machine, the Tramp starts to behave like and to become entwined with the machinery in the factory. First, he dives head first onto the conveyer belt and into the belly of the factory machinery, his body carried along by enormous gears, and then emerges back out onto his place on the assembly line. Now it is the Tramp that goes haywire, as his whole body begins to take on the erratic movements and rhythms of the feeding machine. He cavorts about the factory, gleefully brandishing an oilcan, tripping every switch and cranking every lever in his reach. The machinery has not possessed the Tramp; rather, he engages the factory part of himself. They are linked as 'subjects'.

A close reading of the chicken scene in *The Gold Rush* demonstrates the interrelation of Chaplin, the audience and the film, revealing how Chaplin exploits the relation to make people laugh. In this famous scene, the Tramp and Big Jim are stranded in a dilapidated cabin on top of a mountain during a blizzard. Tensions are running high, as they have nothing left to eat. Big Jim is so hungry that at one point, he is hallucinating from hunger. He begins to see the Tramp not as a man, but as something good to eat. In Big Jim's eyes, there is a giant chicken in the cabin, and the audience sees the Tramp become a man-sized chicken.¹³¹ Big Jim is so convinced of his chicken vision, that he even takes out a shotgun and chases the chicken-Tramp into the snow before realizing his error. It has long fascinated critics how impeccably identical Chaplin's movements are to a real chicken's movements in this scene. Here, Zupančič identifies a short circuit in Chaplin's comedy. Chaplin does not simply become a chicken. "The chicken itself must realize that it is really Charlie Chaplin" (Zupančič 2008:20). The two are always already connected.

That is, it is not an inner chicken that Chaplin responds to, nor is he accessing two opposing selves in himself. In bringing to light "the chickenish properties" of the Tramp himself (Zupančič 2008:19), Chaplin shows us that he shares a

¹³¹ Although special effects were increasingly done post-production, in the film lab, in the 1920s, special effects were constituted by expert camerawork and acting. The transitions to and from the chicken in this scene from 1925 were accomplished completely 'in the camera'. This involved the camera fading out and stopping, while Chaplin changed into a chicken costume and returned to the scene. Then, from the point at which it had started fading out before, the camera would fade in again. Continuing in the same scene, but as the chicken, Chaplin would repeat the movements he had just performed in his normal Tramp costume as the camera faded out. This superimposition was repeated to complete transition from the chicken back into the Tramp (Robinson 1986:340).

connection with the world of the film. He does not split the self into the self and the other, as Plato does in The Republic. According to Havelock's reading of The Republic, Plato places emphasis on the individual, creating separate identity. Havelock calls this "self-conscious separation," in which there is a subject in all situations.

For Plato, it is important to have separation, beginning in the self, because in splitting the human being into two opposing principles - reason and emotion - the object is disconnected from the senses. Plato creates the 'thinking self', separate and distinct from objects. Putting reason or intellect in control of emotions, we gain control over ourselves, and thus, emotional distance from the object (Havelock 1963:47;200;211;216).

For Chaplin, thought and feeling are not separated, but linked. Chaplin's silent films are interrelational and emotional. Burkina Faso director, Idrissa Ouedraogo emphasizes the emotional interrelationship in Chaplin's work, "In the Tramp, it's feelings that are most important... You don't see the skin colour. You don't see *any* colour. You don't see a white man; you see emotions" (Le Péron 2003).¹³² His audience does not see Chaplin's self because, as Ouedraogo explains, of his connection with the film as well as the audience.

4.2.2 A Circle That Never Closes

In contrast with Chaplin's interrelation with the film, I will now turn to Deleuze's "law of the small form and burlesque" (Deleuze 2005:173-181), in

¹³² *Chaplin Today: The Gold Rush*, 2003. Directed by Le Péron, S. USA: Warner Home Video.

which he describes how in slapstick comedy films, situation is deduced from the action. Deleuze applies a formula to the process of Chaplin comedies, “a very slight difference in the action or between two actions, which brings out an infinite distance between two situations, and which exists only to bring out that distance” (Deleuze 2005:173). I am interested in how Deleuze’s work on films traces to his work on the event such as in The Logic of Sense, where two series of events that have tiny differences are “regulated by a strange object” (Deleuze 2004:51). In Cinema 1: The Movement Image (Deleuze 2005:173), a tiny difference in two actions - or gestures - can create a huge distance in two situations. The result of this, he calls a “laughter-emotion circuit,” in which laughter refers to the slight difference, and the emotion refers to the great distance. “If a slight difference in the action induces very distant or opposable situations - S and S’ - and makes them alternate, one of these situations will be ‘really’ touching, horrific and tragic...” (Deleuze 2005:174-175). Deleuze writes that of the two elements in the laughter-emotion circuit, one refers to the slight difference, the other to the great distance, without the one diminishing the other, but as interchangeable elements, “triggering each other off again” (Deleuze 2005:175). Although he views these opposable situations as alternating, he also claims that the slight difference in action exists only to bring out infinite distance between two situations (Deleuze 2005:173).

Deleuze’s law seems to reductively take Chaplin’s gags to be a difference in the action. Deleuze is concerned with the relation of actions to situations, yet he treats the Chaplin gag as a rupture, an interruption. This is because Deleuze sees relation in interruption. S *and* S’ are related through the conjunction ‘and’. Writing on the power of ‘and’, Deleuze posits, ‘and’, being not one or the other,

is an unperceivable line between the one and the other; unperceivable like a vanishing border. For Deleuze, all relations follow from 'and', and through the multiple connections that 'and' creates. The multiple connections from which all relations follow are those that disconnect identity (Deleuze 1976:11). He surmises that audience reaction derives from Chaplin's gestures, which are close to each other, but far apart from corresponding situations (Deleuze 2005:174). Each tiny difference is related to that which is other than itself. They are distinct entities that are at the same time connected.

For Zupančič, the chicken *and* Chaplin are connected. For Deleuze, the "and...and...and..." is "exactly the creative stutter" (Deleuze 1976:11) that occurs when language, under pressure, has reached its limit. Chaplin does not use the power of 'and' in the way that Deleuze does because the chicken and the Tramp are always already connected. This is why Zupančič says the chicken realises that it is really Chaplin (Zupančič 2008:20). The audience and the Tramp are always already connected. Chaplin is in the interrelated world of the film. Chaplin, by almost entirely bypassing language, creates his own brand of stuttering through movement that 'speaks' to the audience. What are connected for Chaplin are the audience, characters and the film.

Establishing a relationship with the audience is important for Chaplin because in identification with the Tramp, the audience becomes emotionally involved. Chaplin, writing about his technique in 1918, says that it is human nature to experience for oneself, the emotions of the figures on the screen. He goes on to describe the satisfaction and the humour that people find in seeing the rich get the brunt of the joke. "Nine tenths of people in the world are poor and resent the

wealth of the other tenth” (Chaplin 1918:134-137). Deleuze’s laughter-emotion circuit does not consider the formula that Chaplin divulges in 1918 and that can be found in most of his films and writings. This could be because Deleuze presupposes the audience, and does not recognise the relationship between Chaplin and audience. Laughter and emotion are part of the interconnected world of the film, which includes audience.

In presupposing the audience, Deleuze misconstrues Chaplin’s connection. In Deleuze’s laughter-emotion circuit, Chaplin’s gestures and their differences are connected through interruption. Chaplin, according to his own writings on his work, sees connection between his movements as the Tramp and the audience. Can Chaplin manage immediacy *and* interruption that is not a self-interrupting auto-affection? Such immediacy would interfere with the relation Deleuze sees in interruption. I will illustrate how Chaplin does carry out immediacy and interruption through listening and through touching.

While Derrida sees a metaphysics of presence and immediacy between touching and the touched, Chrétien identifies an aporia in the study of touch. Touch is an act of presence, but Chrétien believes it is a mistake to say that touching is immediate, because we do not know what touch is or what it means. (Chrétien 2004:85;88). Touch is immersed into what it perceives (Chrétien 2004:119). “We touch continuously, if nothing else at least the ground with our feet.” Chaplin makes contact with the ground in a form of “tactile exploration” (Chrétien 2004:90) that is his Tramp walk. His steps utter dialogue with each other, with Chaplin himself, and with the audience. He not only makes his feet listened to, but also touched.

This evokes the broader question of *Le Toucher*: can there be immediacy without a metaphysics of presence? Merleau-Ponty tries to avoid this problem, claiming self-touching is to be open to oneself, and not an object of oneself (Merleau-Ponty 1968:249). As Watkin explains, for Merleau-Ponty, touching is imminent, but “the circle never closes in self-presence” (Watkin 2009:21).

For Derrida, metaphysics always desires immediate presence and this question of immediate presence runs throughout *Le Toucher*. The text, however, offers no solution to the issue of metaphysics as a Eurocentric philosophical tradition. Robert Bernasconi and Lucius Outlaw, in their deconstructive critiques of Continental Philosophy, both deem the tradition to be ethnocentric (Bernasconi 1997, 2003) (Outlaw 1990, 1996). ‘Continental’ philosophers, Bernasconi asserts, fail “to see more than one continent” (Bernasconi 2003:2). As Simon Critchley points out, philosophy is not indigenous to Europe. Greek culture is “a hybrid ensemble,” Critchley asserts (Critchley 1999:126).¹³³ In order to study the question of immediacy, I will turn next to African philosophy.

4.3 Square Circles

What constitutes African worldview or philosophy is a much debated and politically weighted topic of discussion. There are thousands of cultures in Africa, which makes isolating an African worldview out of these problematic and risks cultural essentialism. Stephen C. Ferguson II, however, contests this, “Though we speak of Greek philosophy, German philosophy, and even

¹³³ Up until the early 1800s, Greek history traced philosophy to the so-called ‘wisdom traditions’ (Egyptian, Hebraic, Babylonian, Mesopotamian and Sumerian) (Critchley 1999:126).

American philosophy, Africana philosophy is seen as a semantic monstrosity bordering on self-contradiction.”¹³⁴ The idea of African philosophy, Ferguson says is received as “sort of like a square circle” (Ferguson 2011:462). Yet, phrases such as ‘European philosophy’ and ‘Western philosophy’, which are no less broad and general, are adequately received.¹³⁵

The aim of turning to African philosophy in this thesis is not to exoticize or to generalise. The phrase ‘African philosophy’ does not imply an essentialist idea of what it means to be African. Past tendencies to form generalizations have promoted negative stereotypes attached to African cultures or African worldviews. For this reason, ‘African philosophy’ is considered essentialist, whereas ‘European philosophy’ is very widely and unapologetically applied. This avoidance of discussion of philosophical thought connected to Africa, I believe is in effect epistemic violence.¹³⁶ The proscription of any discussion of a particular branch of philosophical thought is a form of epistemic violence that

¹³⁴ “In some philosophical circles, the idea of Africana philosophy is seen as a semantic monstrosity sort of like a square circle. Even today, questions continue to be raised about the legitimacy and necessity of Africana philosophy. And the continuing response of the philosophical guild to its presence confirms that its legitimacy is still not generally accepted. The universal character of philosophy, it is said, has no room for ethnic particularity. Though we speak of Greek philosophy, German philosophy, and even American philosophy, Africana philosophy is seen as a semantic monstrosity bordering on self-contradiction. Many Africana philosophers have argued that such criticisms rest on questionable presuppositions concerning the nature of philosophy, its method, and its analysis” (Ferguson 2011:462).

¹³⁵ One exception is ‘Continental philosophy’, a square circle in its own right and perhaps as prickly a term as African philosophy (Glendinning 2006:10-17;109).

¹³⁶ The phrase epistemic violence is first discussed in Frantz Fanon’s The Wretched of the Earth (Fanon 1969). Spivak refers to Deleuze and Michel Foucault’s disregard for “the epistemic violence of imperialism and the international division of labor” (Spivak 1994:84).

ultimately wrecks knowledge of ways of understanding.

This knowledge, as I have revealed in Chapter Two, is essential to the dominant Western philosophical tradition that early Greek philosophy was not conceived in isolation, but via close contact with Egyptian scholars. To deem discussions of African philosophical thought as mere essentialism is to eschew the relation between Greek and Egyptian scholars and what knowledge they might have shared.

As I have cited Olela as saying, these ways of knowing moved through sub-Saharan Africa to Egypt (Olela 1984:43-49). An indigenous African worldview paradigm emphasises harmony, interrelationship, connectedness, and connection to nature and to each other. Spirit and matter are connected. There is interrelation and not separation. In a European worldview paradigm, humans are separate, distinct individuals.¹³⁷ Knowledge of the universe means one is separated from it. There is compartmentalization, control and materialism (Richards 1994:29-30). This opposition, however, and the very language describing this paradigmatic split are based on separation.

Author R. Sambuli Mosha argues in The Heartbeat of Indigenous Africa (Mosha 2000), it is pointless to attempt to explain or define an African worldview. This is because divisive words and phrases such as, religion, spirituality, and politics imply that “each of these is a separate entity that can be viewed, studied, and even lived independently of the others” (Mosha 2000:14). This means life is an

¹³⁷ With Plato’s Republic, separation of self as a thinking subject becomes the way to knowledge and to understanding the world (Havelock 1963:203;208;210).

integrated experience with no place for distinctions and compartmentalisation because “all aspects of life and universe are interconnected and interdependent” (Mosha 2000:14). Mosha manages to clarify the two perspectives without crystallizing a distinction.

Averting one should be cautious in ascribing different classifications to African culture, musicologist Simha Arom explains, “In Africa, mental categories are never as radical as they are in Western culture” (Arom 1994:29). Categories may not be opposed to another, necessarily. “...Two categories may converge to the point where they overlap to some extent, cross each other, reinforce each other, rather than exclude each other” (Arom 1994:29). I argue European philosophy is not as separated as the paradigm prescribes. Understanding the links between ancient European philosophy and African philosophy, Robert Bernasconi suggests, could help philosophers today to “learn more about their own tradition” (Bernasconi 1997:192).

The harmony, interrelationship and connectedness that Mosha describes are difficult to articulate. I believe the Heraclitus fragments discussed in Chapter Two do so elegantly, with no need for divisive or compartmentalising terms. The fragments express this harmony using the song-related elements of call and response and potentially, group singing. In Chapter Two, I indicated the possibility that Heraclitean fragments might uncover an ancient African influence, carried through a musical and oral tradition, revealing a musical lineage that has not been explored in previous interpretations of Heraclitus. This rereading of Heraclitus challenges the origins of logocentric thinking and reveals an inherent connection between dialogue and a form of listening that is

an attending to the call of the other. Dialogue maintains temporal and spatial distance in the difference between speaker and listener, and thus is non-present. Antiphonic discourse, evident in some Heraclitean fragments, assures that a call and a response are separated in time and space, and this difference makes immediate presence impossible. Though spoken, they are non-present. In Chapter Two, I related Heraclitus fragments to logocentrism. The fragments depict the idea of a state of harmony. I believe that a discussion of haptocentrism that explores this spatial and temporal difference that makes immediate presence impossible should also consider these fragments.

4.3.1 Diunital Touching

Vernon J. Dixon uses the term, *diunital* to describe an African worldview, in which something can be “apart and united at the same time” (Dixon 1977:139). This means something can be in one category and not in that category. In diunital logic, perceptual space does not exist. In this view, “a person becomes oriented towards a harmony between the observer and the observed and in which there is an absence of empty perceptual spaces among phenomena” (Carroll 2008:12-13). Harmony is achieved through balance, while Platonic harmony is when a positive term controls or destroys the negative term. In this view, the world is always already connected, immediate, spatially shared and not based on difference.

Conversely, Deleuze, in his work on universal harmony, discusses the notion of a pre-established harmony, rather than harmony that creates connection either through equilibrium or through opposition (Deleuze 2006:147). Deleuze puts forth “a new harmony,” inspired by Leibniz’s harmony and the baroque (Deleuze

2006:139-158). Through harmony, he relates multiplicity to a unity of “differential relations among infinitely small units...” where each unit or monad is open and not closed (Deleuze 2006:147;149). This forms a type of accord in which, simple things are in harmony when “they represent the same universe” (Deleuze 2006:152). In this way, Deleuze presupposes harmony, which is never immediacy.

I argued in Chapter Two, that immediate presence is impossible in dialogue that is the mutual interaction of speaker and listener, because their attending to and answering each other creates the openness intrinsic to dialogue. Speaking and listening share temporal or spatial difference. The preceding discussions of Chaplin’s speechless dialogue with objects and with himself-as-other illustrates an openness to the other. In this openness, experiences of space and time are made possible.

Deleuze’s circuit law seems to work as a type of listening, in which there is dialogue between speaker and listener. The circuit’s closedness, however, sabotages resonance, which involves the intensifying of vibrations that begin inside a body, and wind up outside, as their duration lengthens and their amplitude widens. In other words, resonance extends. Unlike resonance, the laughter-emotion circuit starts in the same place that it finishes, connecting two disparate elements – action and situation. The interval – the ‘and’ - between things in which connection takes place is a spacing movement like Derrida’s *espacement*, which comprises temporal space and spatialized time (Derrida 1973:129;136) (Derrida 2004:67). Deleuze’s circuit, however, is not open to the other and therefore, does not make possible occurrences of space and time.

Spacing, Derrida maintains, is “indissociable” from alterity (Derrida 2004:67). Spacing is not just interval, but movement – “the movement of setting aside” (Derrida 2004:86). Derrida’s questioning of Nancy’s haptology places emphasis on separation, however, resonance is a spacing movement that does not create an interval connecting or separating disparate elements. As I explained in Chapter Three, the movement of resonance is an extension in space and a lengthening in time. Vibrations, however, in order to change in intensity, and in order to be listened to, undergo a back-turning movement that is a referring back of meaning. Echo, as considered in Chapter Three, extends and turns or refers back. Chaplin, like Echo, resounds as he listens to himself (*s’écouter*). Then, turning back, he resounds further away. Chaplin spatializes in his resounding, though not via an interval or by expanding. He extends within the available space of his body and fills that space. The violin, out of whose body resonance resounds, illustrates this type of extension. String tension causes the air inside the violin’s wooden body to vibrate. This movement of vibrations amplifies volume (spatialization) and prolongs duration (temporalization) of the vibrations. Resonance extends first within the space of the violin, causing the intensified vibrations to then leave the violin’s body. Vibrations do not separate; they intensify (Firth, Grant, Wray 1973:237-238) (Richardson 1947:56;76;98).

Chaplin’s dialogue does not occur by separation, but rather, with an interrelationship he has with the audience. Sigfried Kracauer’s 1931 commentary on *City Lights* (Kracauer 1997:115-120) holds Chaplin transcends class differences as the Tramp. Is it the Tramp himself, or is it the connection Chaplin has with his audience, and the transformation that occurs with the audience that cuts across these differences? The Tramp directly confronts, bringing attention

to, rather than transcending class differences. Chaplin's call to the audience beckons the audience to respond. There is a section in *City Lights* when the Millionaire, after buying the Tramp a new suit and a new hat, takes him to a nightclub. After painting the town red, the two return to the Millionaire's mansion. The Tramp and the Butler carry an extremely inebriated Millionaire up the steps and through the front door. The Butler, however, refuses to let the Tramp enter the house, despite his cleaned up appearance, and forces the Tramp to wait outside. While sitting on the front steps, the Tramp sees the Flower Girl strolling past with her walking stick and a large basket of flowers. Meanwhile, the Millionaire comes to his senses and orders the Butler to bring the Tramp in as his invited guest. The Tramp is over the moon, and when the Butler opens the door, the Tramp glides through and scampers over to his rich friend to request some cash to buy flowers. He hurries back out, cash in hand, and chases after the Flower Girl. He purchases the whole lot of flowers with the Millionaire's money, hands the flowers over to the Butler, dismissing him. Then, like a perfect gentleman, he drives the Flower Girl home in the Millionaire's car. This scene is an example of Chaplin hitting issues of poverty and class difference head on. He does so by almost letting the Tramp get away with impersonating a rich man. This is not only because the Millionaire is a raging alcoholic prone to mood swings and the Flower Girl is poor and blind. Posing as a charming, wealthy prince, the Tramp mocks the ruling classes by being utterly himself and not defined by class. For example, he maintains the oversized clown shoes and Tramp shuffle in *City Lights* that he developed on the music hall stage and that he introduced to film audiences in *Kid Auto Races at Venice* seventeen years prior to *City Lights*'s release.

Appearing in 1914 in *Kid Auto Races at Venice* as “a tramp who wanted to have his picture taken” (Oderman 1994:55), Chaplin manages to communicate directly with the audience. He brings about a transformation by confiding in the audience. Stuart Oderman explains the film had to be shot in only forty-five minutes. This tight schedule left no time to do retakes of any scenes. Chaplin’s character “had to be established within the first few feet of film,” and this meant the Tramp had to win the audience over quickly (Oderman 1994:54). Chaplin thus could not afford to become detached from the audience for even a moment. He carries on a dialogue in which Chaplin’s self is in dialogue with a ‘you’, the audience, revealing a self that is as indispensable as you. This recalls the dissymmetry of *se toucher toi* that Derrida describes. Chaplin’s dialogue with the other and self as other also evokes the openness and connection with the audience as in Rastafarian “I-an-I locution” (McFarlane 1998:107) and that Gilroy describes in his “ethics of antiphony.” In similarity to all of these, Chaplin forms a relation with the other – with himself as other and with a ‘you’ (the audience) as other. In this way, Chaplin confides in the audience through this direct communication. I will now extend this to include *ubuntu*, a concept that is employed widely throughout southern African communities.

4.3.2 *Ubuntu*

Ubuntu is a philosophy that emphasises interconnection among people and in which identity of self is formed interdependently through community (Battle/Tutu 2009:1-2). In *ubuntu*, a person is a person through other persons (Tutu 1999:31). “Because ‘I am’ I affect you. Because ‘you are’ you affect me” (Richards 1981:218). In this view, identity cannot be undone. According to *ubuntu*, all people are interdependent as both individuals and as community.

A study by C.B.N. Gade (2012:484-503) finds *ubuntu* to be “rooted in African indigenous cultures” (Gade 2012:486).¹³⁸ In South Africa after the apartheid era, the South African Constitutional Court ruled *ubuntu* as something that is ‘part of the deep cultural heritage of the majority of the population’ (Gade 2012:485).¹³⁹ Christopher Roederer and Darrel Moellendorf trace *ubuntu* “to small-scale communities in pre-colonial Africa, and which underlie virtually every indigenous African culture” (Roederer/Moellendorf 2007:441). While not unique to Africa, *ubuntu* is most prominent in communities found in Africa and “represents the crux of African philosophy” (Roederer/Moellendorf 2007:441-442).

I have already mentioned that there are thousands of cultures on the continent of Africa. Gade describes *ubuntu* as “a dynamic term” with similar versions of the term across many sub-Saharan African languages. For instance, in Kenya, *umundu* and *umuntu*; in Tanzania, it is *bumuntu*; *vumuntu* in Mozambique and *gimuntu* in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Gade 2012:486-487). The Bantu family of languages covers a large area of Southern and West Africa. There are hundreds of Bantu languages and roughly one African in three speaks a Bantu language. As Derek Nurse and Gérard Philippson explain, it is not uncommon for people in Africa to be multilingual, which might mean learning one or more local language, a national language and an international language

¹³⁸ *Ubuntu* has been criticized for its circulation through oral traditions. As Eze describes, this critique depreciates *ubuntu* as “devoid of any authoritative text or historical authenticity” (Eze 2010:8).

¹³⁹ The South African community, the court declared, called for a return to *ubuntu* (Gade 2012:485).

(Nurse/Philippson 2006:1-2). Therefore, *ubuntu* as a dynamic term has a meaning that changes among Bantu and other African languages, but consistently denotes interconnection among individuals that are interdependent with community.

For Michael Battle and Desmond Tutu, *ubuntu* expressed as *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* means, “each individual’s humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others, and, in turn, individuality is truly expressed. A person depends on other persons to be a person” (Battle/Tutu 2009:3). In this way, *ubuntu* is diunital in that it is individual and universal at the same time. Mogobe B. Ramose paraphrases *umuntu ngumuntu nga bantu* as, “To be a human being is to affirm one’s humanity recognizes the humanity of others and on that basis, establish humane relationships” (Ramose 2003:231). I argue Chaplin creates such relationships by recognising the other in his indissociable connection with himself as other and with the audience as other. Through their interaction and mutual influence, Chaplin, other and audience maintain a harmonious balance.

Battle likens *ubuntu* to the notion of the Christian God, as three interdependent persons of God, or Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - that have one nature (Battle/Tutu 2009:3). For Chrétien, who cites Saint Thomas Aquinas, contact between God and soul is mutual (*mutuus contactus*), yet he calls the immediacy in this mutual contact an illusion (Chrétien 2004:129) (Derrida 2005a:254). Can the immediacy in Chaplin’s form of listening (*s’écouter*) be illusion or does an interruption break the immediacy and with it, any chance of self-presence? As a relation that is independent and interdependent at the same time, *ubuntu* has both immediacy and interruption and not simply mutual contact. Is Chaplin’s

connection with himself as other and audience as other a *mutuus contactus*? I will give an example from Chaplin in the next section to illustrate how *se toucher toi*, like Nancy's *s'écouter* breaks with immediacy when it interrupts self-presence.

4.3.3 How To Break With Immediacy

The self according to Nancy, as I have discussed, is a subject in the resonance of the referral. As it listens, the subject approaches the self (Nancy 2007:8-13). In this way, the self that Chaplin approaches touches its self as other. His touching is reciprocal without being an auto-affection. There is a kind of mutual touching that occurs in the last scene of the film City Lights. The scene is known as one of Chaplin's most sentimental - "that cliché that so many critics use to avoid dealing with Chaplin's actual complexity," states Tom Gunning (Gunning 2010:240). By seeing beyond the sentimentality of this scene, we may understand how the scene addresses Derrida's question, "What happens when our eyes touch" (Derrida 2005a:281)? This question presupposes either that there can be touch without contact or that nothing is untouchable. In this scene, the flower girl, who was blind up until this point in the film, finally sees the Tramp with her newfound vision. Initially, although the flower girl looks at the Tramp, she does not see or recognise him. Throughout the film, she believed that the benefactor who funded the operation that restored her sight was a millionaire. Here, she discovers that the Tramp is in fact the person that cared for her when she was ill and who funded the operation that gave her the ability to lift herself out of poverty. In the denouement, the Flower Girl and the Tramp meet each other again through a plate glass window after the Tramp's release from prison. She looks out of the shop window at the Tramp and laughs. She looks out with

two eyes, as she could never have done before when she was blind. The Tramp, looking in, sees her.

What happens next is an interruption, but not a self-interrupting itself as itself. The Flower Girl sees the Tramp for the first time when she touches his hand because sight for her when she knew him before, was touch. What happens when their eyes touch is an interruption to touching. To touch without touching, “to embrace eyes,” *se toucher toi*, Derrida argues, is “to break with immediacy.” It interrupts self-presence, as the Tramp no longer sets his eyes on a blind flower girl who looks inwardly.¹⁴⁰ Touch interrupts “the mirror reflection in its visual.” “Only the ‘self-touching-you...can interrupt the reappropriation or the absolute reflection of self-presence” (Derrida 2005a:290-291). The Flower Girl sees now and understands, no longer taking in the vision of an amusing derelict in the street and no longer touching the hand of a kind and generous millionaire. In this way, Chaplin interrupts and confronts class difference in this scene.

Touching with no contact interrupts. At the same time touchable and untouchable, reflexive and reciprocal, the other is “touched by your eyes” without touching itself or being touched (Derrida 2005a:306):

“...There is no day or night possible, except from the possibility of the gaze and thus of the exchanged look of eyes that meet, as one says, in the

¹⁴⁰ Before screen testing Virginia Cherrill who plays the Flower Girl in *City Lights*, Chaplin had difficulty finding an actress who could act blind without contorting her face. Cherrill’s ability to “look inwardly” is what got her the part. “To my surprise she had the faculty of looking blind. I instructed her to look at me but to look inwardly and not to see me, and she could do it” (Chaplin 2003:323).

abstinence and perjury of tact, since one cannot see anything in the world...without the possibility, at least, of a reflecting surface that makes visible, be it to Narcissus, other eyes, be they his own, still; if all that, then in the instant of this kiss of the eyes, one can ask oneself whether there is already day or night. Then the haptical begins.”

Derrida wants to have Nancean touching as hetero-affection, and not as auto-affection. He conceives of a relation of touching that requires time and space, as does *l'écoute* or resonance. Day and night are possible when one sees the other or oneself as other through, as Derrida says here, “other eyes, be they his own.”

A questioning of Nancy’s touch need not deliver the haptological metaphysics that Derrida finds at the beginning of On Touching. In order to make the point, Derrida separates self and other, rather than letting them be intertwined with each other, as Reynolds does in his reading of Merleau-Ponty. Toward the end of *On Touching*, Derrida says, “Nancy wants to go back before sight...” (Derrida 2005a:305). Similarly, Chaplin wants to go back before cinema. In *City Lights*, Chaplin directly addresses the overhaul of the cinema industry, which by the time of *City Lights*’s release was at the peak of the “talkies revolution,” and at the twilight of silent era of cinema.¹⁴¹ This would be one of the last of Chaplin’s silent films, and therefore, the last appearance of the Tramp. Chaplin resisted the change from silent films to talkies because the talkies would institute a change in the way in which his work would be listened to. To go back before cinema is to

¹⁴¹ However, Yasujiro Ozu, Dziga Vertov, F.W. Murnau, and Charlie Chaplin all released non-talking films in 1931. In January 1931, *City Lights* was released, a film with no dialogue and few sounds.

ask the question, ‘what happens when the Tramp speaks’? In the first chapter of On Touching, Derrida extends the question, ‘When our eyes touch, is it day or is it night’ (Derrida 2005a:2)? ‘When the Tramp speaks, “is it day or is it night; is it *l’écoute* or is it *l’entente*?’” Mutually touched by your eyes, Chaplin manages to balance the harmonious pair. He makes himself understood (*se fait entendre*) and he makes himself listened to (*se fait écouter*).

Chaplin’s diunital listening, like the mutual touching of *se toucher toi* is *l’écoute* and *l’entente*. It follows that the call and response outlined in Chapter Two is more of a diunitality than an antiphony of opposing voices because *legein* and *homologeïn* are apart and independent of each other, while at the same time, being connected. In this way, *legein* and *homologeïn* are independent and interdependent at the same time. This supports the interpretation that *logos* is a type of harmony or ‘hearkening attunement’. Considering Dixon’s discussion of diunitality, I believe that *l’écoute* and *l’entente* are apart and connected at the same time.

Challenges from Derrida and Hallward claim Nancy’s theory of relation is founded on non-relation and as Hallward contends, on singular principles, as I discussed in Chapter Three. In the current chapter, Nancy’s theory in which resonance is non-presence that is also immediacy improves on his thesis on touching that Derrida deems haptocentric thinking. As Derrida points to a metaphysics of presence of touching, in which touch is primary, Nancy brings attention to the neglect for *l’écoute* and emphasis on *l’entente* in Derrida’s deconstruction of logocentrism, which claims speech as primary. Whereas the discussion in Listening on Nancean resonance works as a foil to Hallward’s

critique discussed in Chapter Three, in this text, Nancy responds to Derrida's deconstruction of haptocentrism. In short, Nancy turns around Derrida's critique of touching by questioning Derrida on listening.

I have established that the Tramp, through an attention to the other in which meaning is referred back to himself as other, listens. He listens and he touches through his interrelationship with the audience. Why then can he not speak with the audience and *what happens when the Tramp speaks?* Chaplin could have made *City Lights* as a talkie with synchronised dialogue, but he chose not to. The difficulty Chaplin had with the notion of making the Tramp speak, I believe, is a potential for self-interruption similar to self-touching. When he listens (*l'écoute*), there is difference between himself and other. This other is himself-as-other and audience-as-other at the same time, meaning the two are as indissociable as they are different. If he speaks, he connects only with his same self and not with his self as other. Referring only with his self as his same self releases the potential for self-interruption.

In this thesis, my interpretation of Chaplin's work as the Tramp offers a reassessment of Derrida's study on the privileging of speech. Though Derrida critiques Nancy's touching, Nancy changes the direction of Derrida's argument that the self-presence in *s'entendre-parler* derives from fully hearing oneself while one is speaking. Nancy complicates this on grounds that *s'écouter*, by way of a movement of resonance, refers back to a self that is other. This difference of the self as it refers back to its self as other in the movement of resonance, so crucial to *s'écouter*, does not promote self-presence of meaning. As a speaking character, the Tramp would not refer to his self as other. He would touch only a

same self. This is the potential for self-interruption that I have mentioned above.

Considering Derrida's arguments on voice and on touching, this self-interruption is no interruption at all. A speaking Tramp would form the moment of auto-affection that Derrida sees in Nancy when the "*I* self-touches..." (Derrida 2005a:32). For the Tramp to say I in a talkie, he would touch himself in forming himself as I. This I self-touching himself assumes an internal splitting of the self into self and other as in the Cartesian *cogito*. In this scenario of auto-affection, the I touches the self and not the other. Himself and I are the same. Without any difference, there is no other to contact. There is no spatial difference between the two. I occupies its self and not some space. Therefore, self-touching requires no movement of contact. Thus the I that self-touches cannot contact himself. By attempting self-touching, he contacts no one. To touch himself, he "abstains from touching" (Derrida 2005a:34).

Without the spacing of resonance between audience and the Tramp, his speaking would be non-contact, and thus auto-affection. What happens when the Tramp speaks or if he were to speak while listening (*s'écouter*) to himself as other is to say 'you' to himself. This is the *se toucher toi* that works for the Tramp in *City Lights* and in his other silent films. As a speaking character in a talkie, saying 'you' to himself would only disorient and alienate the audience and confound the film's story. As we saw in the making of *Kid Auto Races at Venice*, Chaplin does not disengage from the audience. In order to express his voice as other, he must maintain *s'écouter*. Through *s'écouter*, he gets across to the audience the striving for dignity that Chaplin uses to create gags with the Tramp. This results in

making people laugh, as he discusses in his essay, “What People Laugh At” (Chaplin 1918:134-137).

Chaplin crafted the character on what people laugh at. Chaplin humanises the Tramp when he creates a gag out of his getting himself into an undignified situation. This further supports my argument from Chapter Two that the Tramp is not alienated from society because he thinks differently. Counter to what Carroll suggests, I see the Tramp’s efforts to regain dignity as working to humanise the Tramp, and not making him an outcast or an object of pathos (Carroll 2007:133-134). Through his striving for dignity, he holds a dialogue with the audience, expressing his voice as other. Chaplin relates to the audience through dignity, as I will discuss in Chapter Six. By representing himself, he represents the other. This expresses an identity that is shared through the common, rather than, as I will explain in Chapter Six, a privileging of identity among sameness.

Chaplin uses a striving for dignity to relate to the audience and to induce laughter in the audience as it relates. A speaking, self-interrupting Tramp would drain the comedy from his gags, inhibiting relation and thereby laughter. Chaplin’s craft is to make people laugh. His method is the mutual listening that intertwines himself, audience and the film. This method works because in not speaking and therefore not self-interrupting, his referral of meaning to himself as other forms a relation of dialogue and common identity with the other.

In order to more closely examine the reasons why the Tramp does not speak, I will investigate in the next chapter, what the Tramp does in lieu of speaking. As with the interruptive difference of *se toucher toi*, the Tramp’s rhythm is a break with immediacy. Taking into consideration notions of polyrhythm and diunital

relations, I will discuss Chaplin's listening in terms of the immediacy and the break with immediacy of rhythm.

Chapter Five: Rhythm and Fire

In Chapter Four, I discussed Derrida's assertion that Nancy bases his figure of touch on Christian theology, which emphasises the distance and discontinuity between touch and touched. In this thesis, the theme of distance is important because it is the immediate proximity of speaker and listener that Derrida implicates in the self-presentation of meaning in his study on logocentrism and the privileging of speech. In this presence, speaker and listener have no temporal or spatial distance between them. One hears oneself speak at the same time that one speaks. This leads to self-present meaning, which implies logocentrism. Logocentric thinking, therefore, supposes the lack of any distance between speaker and listener.

Nancy, in asking what kind of listening philosophy is capable of, questions Derrida's neglect of listening. *L'écoute*, a form of listening that comprises attending to the other, requires stretching out, not just in time, but also in space. This space is crucial in the turning back of resonance, the movement of *l'écoute*, as I described in Chapter Three. The movement of resonance, therefore, maintains spatial distance in its back-turning motion. This back-turning in resonance stretches out in space and extends in time.

Derrida's critique of what he calls haptocentrism, in which he questions the immediacy of touching and what is touched, emphasises separation and difference. For instance, he uses the phrase, *se toucher toi* not as a reflexive gesture, but as a phrase of unity and dissymmetry that also has transitivity. The 'you' and the 'self' in *se toucher toi* are not self-present subjects, but they do have potential duality. Neither the phrase 'I and I' nor *se toucher toi* involve a splitting into two selves. In the case of 'I and I', the 'I' and the 'I' replace and

override the duality of ‘you and I’, or ‘you and me’. In this way, ‘I and I’ is similar to *ubuntu* in that it refers to the interrelation of two or more persons, representing humanity. Similarly, in Gilroy’s “ethics of antiphony,” which I discussed in Chapter Two, performer and audience enjoy a shared relation between them (Gilroy 2004:94) (Gilroy 1993a:200).

In drawing together ‘I and I’, *se toucher toi*, *ubuntu* and the “ethics of antiphony,” I showed how Chaplin’s relation to others via the Tramp character and the audience is a referring back of meaning to himself as other. I have examined in the previous chapters of this thesis, Chaplin’s aptitude for this type of referral. Through his method of listening (*s’écouter*) and not speaking, he refuses to succumb to a self-interrupting self-referral, auto-affection. *S’écouter* must be understood in this thesis as a listening to oneself as other. It is opposed to *s’entendre-parler*, fully hearing oneself while one is speaking. There is self-presence in *s’entendre-parler* and not in *s’écouter*. Therefore, my reading of Chaplin leads to a re-evaluation of Derrida’s indifference to listening in his study on the privileging of speech. Nancy addresses a question of *s’écouter* in his turning around of Derrida’s critique of his thesis on touching as haptocentrism.

In order to connect *logos* to my critique of the presence of self-listening, I have challenged interpretations of Heraclitus fragments from which meanings of *logos* are derived. My aim is to undermine the power and centrality of the *logos* as a moment of presence. I showed that there is antiphony in fragment B50. The self-present subject, or absolute proximity of *logos* and being is impossible there. Picking up on this reference to antiphony, I referred to Chaplin’s dialogue of his self with ‘you’, the audience. There, *s’écouter toi* can be considered as a form of

diunital thinking as discussed by Dixon in the context of a traditional African worldview (Dixon 1977:119-156). In this tradition, as in Chaplin's work, and in *s'écouter*, things can be apart and connected. Sensory experience is fixed and neutral, but also non-fixed and non-neutral (Dixon 1977:137-138). By fixed, Dixon means clear and not deferrable. Neutral here is neither positive nor negative, not strongly one side or another side. This draws together my discussion of antiphony in African music and *s'écouter*. As *legein* and *homologein* or call and response, in Heraclitus fragment B50 are apart and connected in *logos*, Chaplin's self and 'you' are at the same time apart and connected. In this chapter, I will investigate the movement that unites and separates *legein* and *homologein* in the *logos*. Considering this movement, I will expand the examination that ran through the last chapter, in which I sought the reasons for why Chaplin chose not to make the Tramp speak.

Temporal and spatial separation between *legein* and *homologein* creates a gap or an openness to the *logos* of the other. This gap interrupts self-presence. Thereby, *logos* is not a centre. In this way, I have argued, immediate self-presence is impossible with call and response. This view considers Kearney's notion I discussed in Chapter Two that perhaps "there never was a centre," (Kearney 1986:116). In my reading, *logos* as a central presence is wrongly interpreted. It is a movement rather than an anchor or centre.

Logos is a 'hearkening attunement' or harmony that shares similarities with diunitality and with the mutual touching in the last scene of *City Lights*, when to touch eyes without touching - *se toucher toi* - is an interruption, which breaks

with immediacy. Immediacy, for instance, is broken or interrupted when the Tramp touches the Flower Girl's touching with her eyes. He touches touching as he sees her seeing him. *Se toucher toi* or to self-touch-you, therefore, is both immediacy and interruption at the same time, where 'at the same time' means indissociably. The gap and the interrupting movement of touching are indissociable, thus making an immediacy possible that is not based on time (Derrida 2004:86 n42):

...It is not only the interval, the space constituted between two things (which is the usual sense of spacing), but also *spacing*, the operation, or in any event, the movement of setting aside. It marks what is set aside from itself, what interrupts.

In this way, the movement of spacing interrupts. Therefore, the association of spacing and alterity as nothing and as movement is for Derrida, "indissociable" (Derrida 2004:67). The setting aside movement in spacing is always already alterity. What is set aside from itself is other from itself. They do not touch. Spacing's proximation can move in the same place, but not contiguously. In like manner, Nancy sees resonance as a spacing movement in the same place of a self that is not immediate presence. The spacing of Nancean resonance is immediate interruption. In other words, the sonorous place Nancy refers to is a co-presence that "does not consist in a being-present-there," nor an absence, but "rather in the rebound of 'there' or in its setting in motion..." (Nancy 2007:16). This is what Nancy means when he describes a place as relation to self. It is the setting aside of self, and not self-interruption.

In diunitality there is no concept of empty perceptual space. A space can be at once open and closed, empty and not empty (Dixon 1977:139). Dixon illustrates this with the example of people in a room laughing, “We are in a room laughing; we leave the room but laugh remains laughing in the room” (Dixon 1977:137). Thus, the empty room is also not empty, because “it contains Laugh laughing” (Dixon 1977:139). The absence of perceptual space in diunitality implies immediacy, but immediate presence can be ruled out because these diunital elements are also apart, as Dixon argues. Dixon talks about a self that unites with laugh laughing and the room by bridging a gap among the three. He calls this a “tactile contact with the vibrations or forces of laugh laughing,” which is not separate from the self, and thus, not an object (Dixon 1977:138).

Like Derrida’s spacing and Dixon’s diunitality, with Chaplin’s resonance, the interval and interruption, the gap and the touching are indissociable. In resonance, vibrations resound as their natural frequencies are combined with other vibrations. This movement is not an appropriation of space or exertion of power over the other. I argued in Chapters Two and Three that resonance involves a back-turning much like the *palintropos* or modification that changes a call or a response’s direction. Resonance is an immediacy that is not self-presence because although the back-turning modification moves in the same space, it is not in a closed circuit or loop.

5.1 Rhythm

5.1.1 Rhythm and Return

I will now discuss Chaplin’s rhythm in relation to the conjunction of music and language. I will do this by way of a close reading of Chaplin’s silent films in

which rhythm speaks through rhyme, tension, contrast and a steady pulsation. For Gaston Bachelard, rhythm involves bringing back, as in the bringing back of energy (Bachelard 1963:127-128). Return (*renvoi*) in rhythm was also important in early Greek literary traditions because narrative had to be committable to memory and recited. Rhythmic narrative could be recalled in memory. Narrative works from this time were for recitation and for listening, and therefore a poetic tradition became a memorised and rhythmic experience. Early Greek writers had to write “for recitation and for listeners.” Poets assumed their work would be memorised and recited. Therefore, their work had to be repeatable and musical in function (Havelock 1963:42-47).¹⁴³ In order for audiences to listen and understand, the narratives had to have rhythm that made them easy to remember. In this chapter, I will discuss how rhythm and listening work together.

L’entente, as I have explained in Chapter One, means understanding or agreement comes from *entendre*, to hear or to understand something, as with speech. I argue *l’entente* needs rhythm in order to achieve understanding of what is ‘said’ or meant. In this way, speech is carried through rhythm. I discussed in Chapter One, Nancy’s keen ear perceives multiple meanings of listening, where neither *l’écoute* nor *l’entente* is dominant. For Nancy, *l’écoute* is an active stretching toward meaning, and *l’entente* is a more passive listening, in which meaning is understood. This is to say that *l’écoute* is distinctively less mediate than *l’entente*. There is a degree of immediacy in *l’entente*’s perception of meaning that is in *l’écoute*, implying that *l’entente* is always already *l’écoute*. I

¹⁴³ Plato, however, deems meter and rhythm as embellishments. “...the poetic state of mind is for Plato the arch-enemy...” (Havelock 1963:47).

will explore in this chapter the reasons for this through an examination of rhythm in Chaplin. *L'écoute* has immediacy in that it resounds, turning back meaning to self. This is, however, not self-present meaning, but turning back to the self as other. *L'écoute*, therefore, has immediacy without self-presence.

Derrida's deconstruction of logocentrism and phonocentrism does not consider that speech is carried through rhythm or how rhythm is related to the *logos*, as 'word'. There is scant mention of rhythm in Derrida's work on the centrism surrounding *phoné* and *logos*. It would seem that logocentric thinking has no pulse, like a spectre. This is consistent with Derrida's neglect of listening (*l'écoute*) in his discussion of voice that I discussed in Chapter One. Here, as in previous chapters, *logos* is constitutive of music. If, as I say, speech is constructed from rhythm, then rhythm defers and displaces listening. *Logos* is thereby indebted to listening because it is from the back-turning motion, or *palintropos harmonie* that the *logos* gets rhythm. In order to examine this, I will focus on the following aspects of rhythm: beat, pulsation, flow, language and tension in relation to the Tramp and how his listening re-sounds.

5.1.2 Beat and Flow

The word 'rhythm', itself comes from the Greek, *rhythmos*, from the Greek root, *rheo*, which is related to *rhein*, 'to flow'. This recalls *panta rhei*, meaning 'everything flows' or 'everything flowing', a phrase attributed to Heraclitus, for whom constant change or unity of change is a recurring theme. *Panta rhei*, Jaspers explains, is part of Heraclitus' theory of Universal Flux, in which the world is motion. It is always changing. "Everything flows and nothing remains" (Jaspers 1966:19). Plato credits Heraclitus with a theory of universal flux in the

Cratylus (401d, 402a) and the *Theaetetus* (160d), recalling an analogy of a river and “unity amidst change” (Robinson 1991:83-84). This implies harmony as well as rhythm, because rhythm is constant change. What then is flow that ‘everything flows’? According to Adam Bradley, in his work on hip-hop music entitled, Book of Rhymes: The Poetics of Hip Hop (Bradley 2009), flow is “rhythm over time” (Bradley 2009:32). “Flow is where poetry and music communicate in a common language of rhythm” (Bradley 2009:6). He considers the root of the word, ‘rhythm’ in the Greek, *rheo*, meaning ‘to flow’ and related to *rhein*. *Rhyuthnos* for Bradley, is the Greek for ‘rhythm’ (Bradley 2009:6). Emile Benveniste, however, argues the root of the word ‘rhythm’, does not relate to flow as in moving water (Benveniste 1971:285;287). He considers this etymology, which connects *rhein* (to flow) as the root of *rhyuthnos*, to be superficial. “This whole interpretation rests on the wrong premises” (Benveniste 1971:282). *Rhyuthnos*, he believes, is not a reference to flowing water whatsoever, claiming that water currents do not have rhythm (Benveniste 1971:282).

For Bradley, rhythmic elements of flow are: cadence, timing, tempo, and stress or accent (Bradley 2009:6). Chaplin’s movement in resonance is his ‘flow’. In this section, I will draw on Bradley’s work in my examination of Chaplin’s beat and his flow.

The beat, as Bradley tells us, is “the most obvious rhythm we hear” (Bradley 2009:4). I also consider the research of Simha Arom, who explains, the beat in African polyrhythm is not the audible rhythm or melody. The beat is a “regulating pulse” that is intrinsic to the music (Arom 1994:181-182;206). Arom

avours definitions of rhythm that focus on Western music tend to divide rhythm into weak and strong beats. As Arom tells us, African musicians, however, learn to play rhythmic patterns that are taken as a whole, and are not broken down into “regular underlying alternation of strong and weak beats.” This is unlike traditional Western understandings of music.¹⁴⁴ It is difficult for Western listeners, musicians and musicologists to understand African polyphony and polyrhythmics,¹⁴⁵ because they have difficulty conceiving of rhythm that is not heavily dependent on the notion of measure. The only thing that matters in African music, according to Arom, is “the periodic repetition of a single rhythmic cell” (Arom 1994:207). A pulse or pulsation is a temporal unit that repeats in regular intervals and underlies the music. The pulsation is the reference point, which along with contrasting events creates rhythm. A pulsation is a “sequence of reference points with respect to which rhythmic flow is organised” (Arom 1994:181-184;202-207). In other words, the pulsation sets the music’s flow.

Dictionary definitions of rhythm stress bar and strong beat. Arom asserts this ignores the possibility of music with no regular accent (Arom 1994:184). A

¹⁴⁴ For instance, the *chronos protos* in ancient Greek music is the temporal or rhythmic unit, which is not divisible into smaller values, but produces larger multiple groups “by conjunction” (Arom 1994:206) (Apel 1969:165).

¹⁴⁵ Arom offers this definition of polyrhythmics, “...when the parts in a single work have different simultaneous rhythmic organisations, the situation is polyrhythmic” (Arom 1994:205). Strict polyrhythmics, he describes as, “the superimposition of two or more rhythmic figures, each of which is so articulated that its constituent elements (accents, tone colour, and attacks) are interspersed among those of the others so as to create an interwoven effect.” These figures in polyrhythm share the same pulsation (Arom 1994:216).

contrast between weak and strong beats is necessary for syncopation. According to Arom, since African music has no strong beats and no regular accents, there is no use of syncopation (Arom 1994:207). A syncopated note is ‘offbeat’, meaning a note not coinciding with the attack of a beat. The Tramp’s “leaden-foot walk” has a rhythm that is offbeat, yet not in syncopation. Instead, the attack of each step, like the attack of a musical note, does not coincide with the pulsation. The “offbeat” footsteps are more stressed or accented (Arom 1994:207).

Chaplin uses the Tramp walk similarly to his use of the hat discourse illustrated in Chapter Two. Like the Tramp’s walk, Chaplin works the hat in a way that humanises the Tramp while creating a gag out of his striving for dignity, despite his undignified situation. As the Tramp scrambles for his hat, miming in this scrambling movement, the question, “Where’s my hat,” the Tramp regains both his hat and his dignity. As discussed in Chapter Two, this hat gag expresses a voice that is Chaplin’s voice, but as other. He stresses the offbeat movements in his hat gag, while not interrupting the scene’s steady pulsation. Offbeats are another aspect of Chaplin’s flow that he exploits in order to make his hat dialogue listened to.

Chaplin synchronises with the beat in his 1917 film, *The Immigrant*. The Tramp is aboard a steamer sailing across the Atlantic Ocean from Europe to New York. Seasick passengers lumber on the deck of the steamer. Attempting to avoid seasickness, the Tramp balances himself against the ship’s rolling movements by lifting one leg to the side, and touching his cane to his outstretched foot. When the ship leans to the right, Chaplin raises his left leg out to his left side, holding the pose until the ship changes its tilt. As it rolls to the left, Chaplin likewise

outstretches his right leg and his cane. He shuffles up and down the deck of the ship, using this leg lifting method on each side. While afflicted passengers suffer miserably in the background, he moves according to the sea's own rhythm.¹⁴⁶

The steamer continues to rock back and forth as the dinner bell rings and passengers hurry inside to have a meal. Plates of food are set onto tables while the constant rocking of the ship shifts the plates from one side of the tables to the other. The Tramp has to be clever to catch any food as the plates slide. He manages to grab a forkful when a plate reaches his side of the table and as the plate slides away from Chaplin, the passenger sitting across the table from him takes a bite from the same plate. The ship's rolling brings the plate to Chaplin's side again, and in this way, the two share their dinner. As he did on the deck, Chaplin adapts to the rhythm of the ship's movement. The sea's rhythm becomes his rhythm. His listening (*l'écoute*) with this movement makes the gag. He does not need to struggle or to hoard a plate of food in order to get a hot meal. He uses the tilting of the ship in his striving for dignity to be the little gentleman that defines the Tramp character.

Chaplin gained an understanding of the value of rhythm in comedy during his time as a player in Fred Karno's comedy troupe. Karno was a perfectionist when it came to tempo and rhythm (Robinson 1986:86). Stan Laurel, Chaplin's fellow Karno player describes what it was like working for Karno, "Each man working for Karno had to have perfect timing and had to know the peculiarities of

¹⁴⁶ Chaplin exploits the seasickness gag fifty years after *The Immigrant's* release in his final film, *The Countess from Hong Kong* (Chaplin 1967), in which the action takes place almost entirely on a cruise liner.

everyone else in the cast so that we could, collectively, achieve a cast tempo” (Robinson 1984:16). Chaplin drew on what he learned working as a Karno player throughout his film career and this included an awareness of tempo and rhythm. I will next discuss two scenes from *Modern Times* to illustrate tempo and the aspect of Chaplin’s flow in which he deviates from a rhythmic pattern.

In the first scene that I will discuss, the Tramp has been thrown in jail. We see him sitting down to a meal in the prison’s dining hall. While he delights in his free plate of food, we see a man seated next to the Tramp transfer what looks like white powder into a saltshaker. Detectives arrive and remove the man, leaving the shaker of powder behind. The gag begins when the Tramp seasons his beans and bread with the salt/cocaine. He becomes very alert, wide-eyed and hyperactive. He walks in circles when the inmates are marched back to their cells and inadvertently wanders into the prison yard, thus getting himself locked out of his cell. When some of the inmates capture the warden and wage a prison break, the Tramp, in his drug-induced state uses his new powers to dodge bullets, overtake the attackers, knocking out the baddies one at a time, and finally releasing the warden. Chaplin’s flow is at work in this scene, as Chaplin forms a rhythmic pattern, and then departs from that pattern (Bradley 2009:36-37). A change in the Tramp’s tempo and the contrast it creates becomes the gag itself. Chaplin knows what the audience will expect and he contradicts it in a way that will get the response that he wants.

I will now turn to a scene in *Modern Times*, in which Chaplin establishes and then departs from a rhythm. The Tramp briefly has a job as the night watchman at a large department store. He invites the Gamin inside the store after hours to

get a bite to eat at the lunch counter while they have the run of the place. After their snack, they wander upstairs to the toy department and find two pair of roller-skates. The Tramp and the Gamin skate around the toy department, which they soon discover is under construction. The Tramp is a natural on skates, skating on one foot and twirling his cane in the air. He turns expertly and glides backwards into the next room, not noticing that it is under construction. He skates blindfolded around the room, having no idea of the danger, pirouetting and hugging the edge of a ledge with a long drop to the level below. The Tramp glides backwards to the edge and stops on one toe. Once he sees the precariousness of his position, he changes his tempo again.

Chaplin's performance in this scene foreshadows a type of scene from the musicals that were to emerge from Hollywood in the nineteen thirties. Gene Kelly does the standalone musical number with sublimity. He showcases his dancing using long scenes, often without any spoken or sung dialogue. Kelly maintains perfect consonance – even on roller skates. In a remarkable solo dance scene in *It's Always Fair Weather* (Donen/Kelly 1955), Kelly glides through the streets of New York City on roller-skates, and deftly tap dances with the roller-skates on his feet. In the film musical, *Summer Stock* (Walters 1950), Kelly, finding himself alone back stage, discovers a creak in the wooden flooring. He begins a small tap dance, letting his toe touch the floor to activate the creak in rhythm with his tapping. Next, he brushes his toe past a sheet of newspaper on the floor and he starts a tap dance. Kelly's dance evolves into an energetic musical number, as he harmonises with found objects. The scene is about one man listening to and interacting with found objects in the world around him. Though Kelly's steps are in perfect consonance with his environment, he starts

and stops the rhythm when a musical number begins and ends. Chaplin's rhythm is continuous, even when interrupted, as we saw in the *City Lights* scene discussed in Chapter Four. Kelly, however, does not answer a call or interrupt a pulsation. In the *Modern Times* scenes mentioned above, Chaplin forms a rhythmic pattern, which he then deviates from.

5.2 Words-Cum-Music

Chaplin shows us how he stays “in the pocket” of the beat. Staying “in the pocket” is the way in which he finds the place where his voice is rhythmically synchronised with the beat (Bradley 2009:6). “This doesn't mean simply flowing in lockstep...” It is instead, to create “moments of calculated rhythmic surprise” (Bradley 2009:6). I will illustrate in the following subsections how rhythmic patterns can carry and transform meaning.

Rhythm, as Bradley tells us, speaks when words cannot (Bradley 2009:4). I argue the reason for this can be found in the connection between music and language that Victor Kofi Agawu explores in his book on the Northern Ewe culture in the Volta Region of Ghana. Agawu has written extensively on rhythm in West African music. A large part of his study is about the role of rhythm in society, in which ‘rhythm’ means “always-connected” (Agawu 1995:1;7).

Agawu tells us there is not any single word for ‘music’ in West African languages, and there is no single word for ‘rhythm’ in Ewe, which Agawu takes as an indication that rhythm is “a binding together of different dimensional processes,” such as music and language. Agawu posits language is the root of music in West African cultures. He explains, in a West African context, music is originated in language. Music and language are in conjunction, and not

separated. Klaus Wachsmann wrote in 1969, "there is hardly any music in Africa that is not in some way rooted in speech." He makes this claim when drawing attention to song texts in African musicology, advising us "to think in terms of words-cum-music" (Wachsmann 1969:187). Wachsmann states, "Many drum beats are not only taught with the help of speech patterns but are also understood and added to by the listener in such manner. It is altogether advisable to think in terms of words-cum-music as a single phenomenon that is treated separately only in analysis" (Wachsmann 1969:187). In this scenario, the musician uses the spoken word to learn to play rhythm and the listener uses spoken word to perceive and to understand the rhythm played.

Spoken language constructed from rhythm and music comes out of these speech patterns. Rhythm brings together what Wachsmann describes as being separated. In this way, rhythm speaks. Arom, Agawu, Wachsmann and Bradley illustrate an inter-connection of spoken word and rhythm. Arom links music indissociably with speech. Bradley sees the strength of rhythm is its partnership with language and Agawu observes that music, through rhythm, is derivative of speech. Agawu explains that West African languages generate music by way of rhythms that are derived from spoken language. He discusses two tone languages - Ewe and Siwu - whose varying relative pitch of syllables determines meaning. Rhythmic qualities of language such as accent, duration, and resulting pattern transform meaning. Agawu cites an example of this in tense markers, or verbs that transform from past to present by doubling the length of the vowel (Agawu 1995:33-34). This irreducibility and inseparability in Northern Ewe music and verbal arts is exhibited in its poetry, conceived in relation to song (Agawu 1995:32). The Ewe word for poetry is *hakpanya*, meaning literally, 'words for

carving song' (Agawu 1995:32). Hidden musical characteristics become manifest in the turning of language into song, "its latent musical elements are made patent" (Agawu 1995:60). Arom argues speech and music are so closely interconnected that they are indissociable (Arom 1994:11). Bradley observes, rhythm and language work together, becoming more powerful than vocalisation alone (Bradley 2009:6-7).

For Agawu, rhymes further "rhythmicize" language (Agawu 1995:63-64). For Chaplin, one of the most effective ways of contradicting audience expectations in order to get the desired response is through his use of rhyme. In the previous chapter, I asked, "What happens when the Tramp speaks?" In this chapter, I answer that the Tramp never speaks; he does, however, rhyme.

Bradley explains rhyme relies on listeners' expectations and their ability to identify patterns. In this way, listeners anticipate the rhyme that follows (Bradley 2009:49). Rhyming has to do with repetition, similarity and rhythm, but also novelty and surprise. Rhyme transforms meanings through this similarity and difference. Bradley thinks of rhyme as an echo that has a transformative effect on language and meaning (Bradley 2009:50;52). In rhyme, disparate words are connected and then reconciled. The audience completes this connection and reconciliation through listening. Rhyme, by way of its listeners, can expand language's capacity, thereby creating meaning (Bradley 2009:69;83;xiii). "Personal gestures come in some surprising form" (Minney 1954:81). In order to "create the unexpected in a new way," the audience attends to Chaplin's gestures and forms expectations (Minney 1954:81).

5.2.1 Rhyme Gives Weight To Emotions

Deleuze discusses in Difference and Repetition (2004:24), rhyme as the repetition and difference between two words that forms meaning. He warns that rhyme's meaning does not "lie in marking equal intervals," but in musical rhythm. Without rhythm, after all, there can be no rhyme. Deleuze sees the importance of patterns, repetition and rhythm for rhyme. What Deleuze fails to mention, and what Chaplin understands, is that listening, as well as audience expectation are equally essential to rhyme. Chaplin explains in "What People Laugh At" how he always aims to do something different from what the audience expects (Chaplin 1918:134-137):

I always try to do the unexpected in a novel way. If I think an audience expects me to walk along the street while in a picture, I will suddenly jump on a car. If I want to attract a man's attention, instead of tapping him on the shoulder with my hand or calling to him, I hook my cane around his arm and gently pull him to me.

Here, Chaplin explains how he utilizes audience expectation for the success of his gags. Expectation is essential to rhyme, and in many cases, Chaplin's gags themselves rhyme. How audiences responded to Chaplin's gags and rhymes, we cannot know for certain. We do know that in practice, Chaplin rigorously listened to his audience. In 1931, Chaplin comments on his work, "I have been able to establish exact principles to govern its reactions on audiences. It has a

certain pace and tempo.”¹⁴⁷ Chaplin did much research into audience reactions to his films and he regularly sat in the audience during screenings. He turned back to listen to his audience listening and reacting, incorporating these findings into his work.

Chaplin learned at Karno’s that the unexpected pie in the face is funnier than the anticipated one (Robinson 1986:87). Through his awareness of expectation and the unexpected, Chaplin develops a direct relationship with the audience, and he has a strong connection with his audience because he rhymes. He uses his own flow – the tempo and timing of his movements - in governing audience reaction. To illustrate this manipulation of the audience by playing on its expectations, Chaplin describes the introductory scene of *The Immigrant*. The film opens with a shot of the Tramp leaning so far over the side of a ship that his head and arms are not visible. The audience can see his shoulders convulsing as if he is being sick. “...Everyone thinks the poor devil is paying his toll to the sea” (Arnheim 1957:36). The audience, expecting to learn that the Tramp is feeling seasick, is surprised and amused at the reveal (Chaplin 1918:134-137):

What I was doing was deliberately misleading the audience. Because, when I straighten up, I pulled a fish on the end of a line into view, and the audience saw that, instead of being seasick, I had been leaning over the side to catch the fish.

¹⁴⁷ <http://www.charliechaplin.com/en/films/6-modern-times/articles/6-Filming-Modern-Times>

While Keaton, Lloyd and Arbuckle employ simile and metaphor, Chaplin rhymes, through movements, gestures and expressions that surprise and hook the audience. For instance, in *The Pawnshop*, the audience identifies a pattern of contrasting actions that Chaplin rhymes. Arriving late for work, the Tramp looks to the calendar as he winds his watch to match it. He places his cane inside a tuba, his hat inside a birdcage. Later, he returns to the birdcage and places feathers from a hacked up feather duster into the birdcage as well. What makes the gag is the transformation of meaning as he plays on the audience's expectations. First, he transforms the meaning of typical pawnshop items – a tuba and a birdcage – to become domestic fixtures that would be used to hold such gentlemanly accoutrements as a cane and a hat. The audience expects after having seen a tuba umbrella stand and a birdcage hat stand, for the Tramp to continue the theme, however, he changes his tack when the feather duster gets chewed to pieces by an electric fan. The Tramp next takes a wad of feathers from the masticated duster, opens the birdcage, and places the feathers inside next to the hat. Chaplin rhymes by referring back to the birdcage and adding a contrast of the identifiable pattern of transformed meaning by placing semblances of a bird into the cage. Rhyme expands and creates meaning through the audience listening to his rhyming.

In *The Pawnshop*, we see how Chaplin applies rhyme and the meanings that rhyme carries as a referring back of meaning as in Nancy's resonance and like the back-turning movement of Heraclitus Fragment B51. In *Sunnyside* (1919), however, when the scene involves more emotional themes, subtler rhymes are needed and these could unfold over several scenes. The Tramp, paying a visit to the house of Edna Purviance's character that he is smitten with, runs, bounding

down the road toward the house. He leaps over a picket fence, despite that the front gate has been left wide open, lands with both feet on the ground, and closes the front gate behind him. He next picks some flowers and enters the house with a bouquet that he presents to Edna.

Later, the City Chap enters and faints on arrival at the Evergreen Hotel, run by the Tramp's boss. The City Chap lies on top of the concierge's desk where he slowly comes to. The Village Doctor is on the scene, assisted by the Tramp on the other side of the desk. With a doctor's bag filled with veterinarian's tools, the Village Doctor treats the City Chap as one would treat a sick horse. He checks his pulse and strokes the Chap's shoulder. The Tramp does the same on the opposite side, checks the Chap's teeth, and takes out a small pocket watch. The Tramp places the watch into his own mouth, waits a few seconds and takes it out, inspects and shakes the watch as one would a mercury thermometer. Then with a worried look, he shakes his head. The hotel scene is much like the scene in *The Pawnshop* mentioned above. The gags transform meaning through audience expectation. The audience listens as Chaplin's rhyming changes and expands meaning.

Arriving again at Edna's house, the Tramp approaches the front gate skipping and running, leaps over the fence, and then as a gust of wind blows at the gate, he makes sure the gate stays open. Then he picks some flowers. This time before going inside, he watches through the window, and spies the City Chap sitting with Edna, his hand on hers. The Tramp is devastated. He tears up the flowers in his hand and despondently makes his way for the gate to leave. With his head hung low, he shuffles through the front gate and pauses long enough to shut it

behind him. This is Chaplin in the sentimental mode that his critics detest. The *Sunnyside* example is a case where the complexity of rhyme patterns correlates to the complexity of the subject, which poet Saul Williams suggests “is much more easily digestible through the use of rhyme and rhythmic patterns” (Williams 2006:110). The Tramp expresses his sadness and feeling of rejection by lugubriously approaching the gate. Then, rather than jumping over the fence as the audience has come to expect, he takes the conventional route through the gate, taking care to shut it properly. Chaplin gives the audience patterns to recognize and to anticipate, and then compels the audience into taking dissimilar movements together. In this way, the rhyme gives weight to his emotions.

5.3 Never Mind The Words

In *Modern Times*, the Gamin, who has been successful in finding a job as a dancer in a restaurant convinces her boss to give the Tramp a chance working as a singing waiter who entertains the restaurant patrons. In the denouement of the film, the Tramp quickly proves to be the world’s worst waiter, thereby placing pressure on him to perform well as a singer. Before it is his turn to sing a song, the Gamin writes the words to the song on the Tramp’s cuff to remind him of the lyrics. He unluckily loses the cuff as soon as he hits the dance floor. The music begins and he does not remember the words to the song. What happens next in this remarkable scene marks the first and the last time the Tramp is heard. While the band plays, the Tramp struts around the dance floor, looking for the cuff with the words written on it and looking to the Gamin who is unable to help him. She calls to him to “Sing!! Never mind the words.” He does not recover from his amnesia, nor does he recover his cuff. Taking his friend’s advice, he opens his mouth and begins to sing, not in English, and not in any recognizable language.

The song he sings is a pantomime comedy song with accompanying nonsense lyrics sung in a way that conveys a story without using any intelligible words. The essential ingredient in this recital is in the way the Tramp rhymes the nonsense words. The words in his lyrics make no sense, but his rhymes have meaning to the audience via a distinctive cadence, the Tramp's movements and expressions.

What follows here is a transcription of the song by the author of this thesis and is not taken from the film script. The purpose of the transcription is to describe the song phonetically in order to illustrate the rhyming that Chaplin uses:

Sappella du say doray

Juh no tray say catoray

Juh no tray si tavoray

Shella toola teela twah

La spinage o la beesho

See grayta toe ta bello

See rakish spaka leto

Seela toola teela twah

Senyora beela seena

Voolay voola taxi meeta

Le zee onta soola zeeta

Toola toola toola wah

See montya seena murra

Le soontya supra vurra

Ne zoomsha com surra

Shella pushsa teela twah

Juh no tray sulla meena

Jay no tray soka seena

Juh lussa trossa vita

Juh la tossa veela twah

Say motra sulay sunta

Jee vussa lotra volta

Nee zosha seeka tota

Tra la la la tra la la

The Gamin calls to the Tramp to never mind the words because she knows that he can make the audience listen to the song by way of rhythm. By so doing, Chaplin makes his listening (to the rhythm) listened to (by the audience). As the Tramp sings impromptu in an invented language, he does “the unexpected in a novel way” (Chaplin 1918:134-137), rhyming following the rhythm of the original, forgotten words to the song, while his flow is in time with the band playing. The Gamin shouts her imperative, “Sing!! Never mind the words!” As the band continues to play, the rhythm of the song demands that its story be told, as if to say, *Rhyme!! Never mind the words!* Rhythm speaks when words cannot (Bradley 2009:4). Rhythm is the imperative, the factor that makes listening necessary, because it connects and makes less mediate speech. Nothing comes between Chaplin and the audience, or between Chaplin and the film. In making himself listened to, his resonance is continuous, and not grounded in immediate

self-presence, but in non-present immediacy of rhythm.

From his rhyming to his miming and dancing between verses, the Tramp is a huge hit with the restaurant audience. Backstage, while the crowd applauds and calls for more, the restaurant owner offers the Tramp a steady job - an offer that the Tramp will not take up. This point in the film and the Tramp's performance in this scene symbolise the reason that Chaplin did not take this peculiarly dialogical figure into the realm of the talkies. The transition to talkies brought an obsession with synchronised speech and image. The new 'sync sound' of the talkies gave rise to an obsession with immediacy and presence of self by way of *s'entendre-parler*. This fixation, however, suppresses rhythm in its constructing of sync by separating word and image, and then marrying them together in the final version. Chaplin believed audible speech synchronized with moving image would ruin his Tramp character. This transition would be the end of the Tramp because the flow of his movements is expressly differentiated from the spoken word. When Chaplin says of the talkies, "Action must wait upon words,"¹⁴⁹ he refers to the rhythm of the Tramp's language that does not require the spoken word and becomes manifest in rhyme, flow and tension. Dialogue obstructs his flow. It is not an interruption, promoting tension, but it is rather a barrier to flow, quelling rhythm.

5.4 Tension

How does rhythm make speech less mediate by speaking when words cannot? Spoken language, as I have set out in this chapter, is linked with a constant

¹⁴⁹ <http://www.charliechaplin.com/filming/articles/6-Filming-Modern-Times>

change in accented recurring patterns that comprises rhythm. This state of flux among opposing forces activates tension. For example, African cross-rhythm is a complex form that despite its interweaving of different rhythmic figures that consistently repeat, has as its basic reference, a steady pulsation. The contrast creates “a permanent sense of tension” (Arom 1994:206).

Rhythm in this instance is, like *se toucher toi*, both immediacy and interruption. Derrida, in his explanation of sight as touching, supposes an interruption. When eyes touch, they intersect the touchable visible eye and the untouchable seeing eye (Derrida 2005a:281). The heart of the other, however, cannot be touched, nor does it touch itself. It self-touches you (*se toucher toi*). “...The other heart, the heart of the other... touches this heart, my body, in my body, and can no longer be dissociated from it” (Derrida 2005a:283). Derrida considers this interruption that is also immediacy further, discussing the “regular alternation” of the heartbeat through systole and diastole.¹⁵⁰ “What interrupts circulation is what makes the heartbeat and it’s you, the *you* of self-touching-you” (Derrida 2005a:284). In other words, there is interruption and immediacy in the heart’s rhythm.

¹⁵⁰ Systole and diastole refer to the movement of the heart muscle. Systole is when the heart contracts and diastole is when the heart relaxes. The heart pumps blood during systole and fills with blood during diastole (Soanes 2008:397;1462).

Considering speech's inherent rhythm, how does logocentric thinking, which accords power and primacy to spoken word, undermine listening? Rhythm gives immediacy to speech, and not as *s'entendre-parler*. Rhythm is a non-present immediacy in speech. To understand speech (*entendre*), *l'entente* is necessary. As I have illustrated through the findings of Arom, Agawu, Wachsmann and Bradley, rhythm is inherent to speech. In order to be attended to and to resound, speech's rhythm demands *l'écoute*. *L'entente*, therefore, is always already *l'écoute*. Listening in this way is indissociably *l'écoute* and *l'entente*, in a diunital relation.¹⁵¹

Nancy recognises *l'écoute* as more than or beyond *l'entente* (Nancy 2007:32):

If *listening* is distinguished from *hearing* both as its opening (its attack) and as its intensified extremity, that is, reopening beyond comprehension (of sense) and beyond agreement or harmony (*harmony* [entente] or *resolution* in the musical sense), that necessarily signifies that listening is listening to something other than sense in its signifying sense.

5.5 Turnings of Fire

In previous chapters, I have established that listening is a tension that is a stretching toward meaning. Listening and spoken word, discussed in this chapter are related to the constant changing and contrast that creates tension in rhythm. In order to further examine this movement of rhythm, I turn again to Heraclitus, who sees *logos* in all changes (Vlastos 1995:144). In the back-turning

¹⁵¹ Diunital terms can be undecidable, but not all undecidables are diunital.

adjustment¹⁵² of the bow and the lyre in Heraclitus fragment B51, changes move in opposite directions and rhythm keeps the tension, connecting what is apart.¹⁵³ “...While differing from...(it) is in agreement with itself” (Robinson 1991:37) refers to the tension in the continuous interruption in the bow’s turning back after each of its movements across the lyre. The differing, the opposites are in contrast and not in conflict. They differ and they agree diunitally.

Contrast and tension are at work in Fragment B50 between *homologeîn* and *legeîn*. Tension between *legeîn* and *homologeîn* connects them in the *logos*, connecting a contrasting call and a response. As happens in Gilroy’s ethics of antiphony, which connects performer and audience (Gilroy 2004:94), in Fragment B50, rhythm and listening are related by way of the *logos*. Listening is not an absence of *legeîn* or *homologeîn*, but the back-turning when the *logos* turns back between *legeîn* and *homologeîn*.

In the scenario put forth in Heraclitus Fragment B50, *homologeîn* refers to the saying together of the response, *hen panta*, ‘all is one’. Vlastos considers the double role of ‘one’ in Heraclitus’ ‘unity of opposites’, “It

¹⁵² Vlastos translates *harmonie* from *palintropos harmonie* from *harmozo* meaning, ‘to fit, adapt, accommodate’ as ‘adjustment’ rather than ‘attunement’ or ‘connection’ (Vlastos 1995:137).

¹⁵³ Robinson cites the Hippolytus version of Heraclitus fragment B51. Plato discusses the harmony of the lyre in *Symposium* (187a-187c) to illustrate the bringing of harmony out of discord. Anthony Briggman writes on Greek theologian Iranaeus’ (130 to 200A.D.) use of the lyre to illustrate harmony. Briggman observes how Iranaeus indicates Plato as a source. He asks if Hippolytus used the same source that Plato used as well (Briggman 2012:144-145).

is itself one *of* the opposites, yet it explains the unity *in* all opposites, it is both one *among* the many and the one which *is* the many.” (Vlastos 1995:72). This is a similar line of thinking to Nancy’s essay, “Of Being Singular Plural” (Nancy 2000:1-99). For Nancy, the singular is each one and in singular plural, “the singularity of each is indissociable from its being-with-many and *because*, in general, a singularity is indissociable from a plurality.” In this way, one and many are inseparable. The singular is each one, with and among others, and therefore, plural (Nancy 2000:32).

Referring to the phrase, *hen panta* in Place, Commonality and Judgment (Benjamin 2010), Andrew Benjamin asks, “...What is the ‘all’ such that it is ‘one’?” (Benjamin 2010:48). In light of Benjamin’s question, I believe the phrase, *hen panta* ‘all is one’ refers to the interdependency of the *kosmos* or universe and its inhabitants. This has similarities with the concept of *ubuntu*, which I discussed in Chapter Four. In *ubuntu*, all people are interdependent, or “A person is a person through other persons” (Eze 2010:11). This reading of Fragment B50 has a broader meaning than *ubuntu*. *Hen panta* encompasses the harmony and the rhythm of the *kosmos*, and not just humanity.

Benjamin suggests a parallel between the *kosmos* and *pur* or ‘fire’, eliciting the question, “what is fire?” Fire is the foundation of the world, and the world for Heraclitus, says Jaspers, is motion or flux. “Everything flows and nothing remains” (Jaspers 1966:19) is an idea attributed to Heraclitus, as well as “All

things are in flux,” ascribed to him in Plato’s *Cratylus*¹⁵⁵ and *Theaetetus*¹⁵⁶ (Kirk 1962:14). As a foundation, fire is changing constantly in different directions, each a part of the whole *kosmos* (Cherniss 1964:382-383). Fire is always changing and always the same. This leads to the possibility, as Philip Wheelright writes in 1959, that fire could have a meaning other than fire itself. Wheelright contends fire is the Heraclitean idea that expresses change in the continually changing *kosmos* (Wheelright 1959:38). This constant changing is evident in the movement of the sun, moon, and stars, all exhibiting the fiery properties of heat and light. Kahn understands fire as a metaphor for the sun, “What Heraclitus’ words imply is a direct parallel, in poetic terms an identification, between fire and sun” (Kahn 1979:140). In Heraclitus fragment 6, “The sun is...new each day” (Robinson 1991:13) because the sun changes its position in the sky, yet it is always the same sun.

Kahn puts the fire fragments into a temporal context, “The measures by which fire is kindled and put out are to be understood as in some sense a re-enactment of the sun’s regular course from solstice to solstice” (Kahn 1979:140). These are Heraclitus fragments B30, 31a, 31b, 76a, 76b, 76c, and 90. Kahn translates

¹⁵⁵ *Cratylus* 440B, C: Things are in flux, ‘as those around Heraclitus...say and many others’ (Kirk 1962:14). *Cratylus* 440D: “...all things are flowing like leaky pots...” (Fowler 1963:191). *Cratylus* 402 A: “Heraclitus says, you know, that all things move and nothing remains still...” (Fowler 1963:67).

¹⁵⁶ *Theaetetus* 152D, E: “...nothing is one thing just by itself, and that you can’t correctly speak of anything either as some thing or as qualified in some way...not only Protagoras, but Heraclitus and Empedocles as well...everything is the offspring of flux and change” (McDowell 1973:17). *Theaetetus* 156A: On Protagoras’s ‘secret’ doctrine, “the universe is change and nothing else” (McDowell 1973:22).

tropai as a temporal term, “For the sun the *tropai* are the limits in an annual oscillation, marking the seasons of the year.” Kahn cites the use of the phrase, *eteon peritropai*, which means ‘cycle of the seasons’ and the normal literary usage of *trope* in Homer, Herodotus and Hesiod as either a retreat of defeated troops in battle that turn and run, or the ‘turnings’ of the sun at solstice,¹⁵⁷ when it “begins its movement back in the opposite direction” (Kahn 1979:140;313-314). Unlike Burnet and Kirk, for Kahn, the central theme of the fragments has to do with periodicity and measure occurring regularly over time. Kahn insists on the fragments’ reference to cyclical processes such as day and night (Kahn 1979:150;152):

The unity of primordial fire and differentiated world is simply the unity of day and night written in the largest possible letters, like the unity of summer and winter within the rhythmic structure of a great or greatest year.

Kahn connects a changing fire with a temporally organised world, discernible in the rhythm of day and night and the changing of the seasons. Fink also connects fire and rhythm to the times of day and seasons of the year, pointing out the alternation of day and night (Heidegger/Fink 1979:37):

The times of day and seasons apparently stand in connection with a fire that does not, like lightning, suddenly tear open and place everything in

¹⁵⁷ The two times in the year, when the sun reaches its highest or lowest point in the sky at noon, marked by the longest and shortest days (Soanes/Stevenson 2008:1373).

the stamp of the outline, but that holds out like the heavenly fire and, in the duration, travels through the hours of the day and the times of the season.

Here Fink discusses fragments 11 and 100, in which the seasons are mentioned, relating these with Heraclitus' sun fragments and fire fragments. He then goes on to discuss how the movement of this "heavenly fire" of the sun gives rise to measure (Heidegger/Fink 1979:38):

...We can understand measure in reference to the passage and course of the sun. Sun, as the fire that travels the heaven, has specific measures in its course like the measures of morning light, of midday heat and of subdued twilight.

This sun-fire, Fink argues, creates temporal units of measurement in its movement, "The metric of the sun's course mentioned here lies before every calculative metric made by humans" (Heidegger/Fink 1979:37).

Kahn thinks *logos* also implies measure, but offers no suggestion as to what kind of measure this could be. He finds the words *metia* and *metreisthai*, meaning 'measures' and 'to measure' occurring in three Heraclitean fragments, but Kahn maintains there are additionally several fragments where *logos* may convey a sense of measure (Kahn 1979:149). Vlastos observes "...The constancy of a *logos* or *metron* preserved in all changes whatever" and in every turning, the exchange of fire is constant (Vlastos 1995:70;144). Vlastos implies that the fragments maintain the notion of a constant rhythm in that the changing movement or turnings of fire is measured by a constant metric *logos*.

These notions of change and contrast connect with definitions of rhythm from Agawu, Arom and Bradley that I have discussed in the preceding sections, in which contrast combines with a constant pulsation or reference point to create rhythm. In my reading of Heraclitus in Chapter Two, for instance, contrasting elements such as call and response in antiphony are related by *logos* and the tension among them. Turning from call to response in the dialogue of *logos* is a *tropai* or turning. This *tropai* is important in the constant changing and holding of the steady pulsation that keeps tension in rhythm. The place of a self in Nancean resonance exploits *tropai* in its back-turning movement in order to refer back meaning to itself as other. By turning back and extending, the sonorous body makes its vibrations attended to or listened to. This attending to the other is a form of listening. Thus, *tropai* are vital to the flow of rhythm and the resounding of *l'écoute* in resonance.

For Heraclitus, all things are *tropai* of fire. Fire has rhythm, Benjamin argues, that reveals itself as “actual fire” (Benjamin 2010:48), and “Fire can only be understood in terms of the continuity of its own instantiation” (Benjamin 2010:52). I believe what is instantiated is not actual fire, as Benjamin suggests, but actual rhythm. The earth’s movement, revealed in solar, astral and lunar fluctuations are the actual rhythmic changes of the *kosmos*, symbolized by fire (*pur*) in Heraclitus fragments. Rhythmic changes are manifest in lunar cycles and stellar constellations. Fink speaks of the notion in the fragments of day and night as having the presence or absence of light. Fire is present at night in the moon and stars, and not only during daylight hours. The night sky is perforated with ‘fire’, by stars and through sunlight reflected by the moon. I argue *tropai* of fire or turnings of rhythm refers to the constant change in the *kosmos*. In a temporal

sense, *tropai* of fire, such as day and night, are changes that are part of the rhythm of the *kosmos*.

5.6 Everything Flows

5.6.1 Turning Points, Tension and Flow

The change of direction of fire in fragment B31a also suggests rhythm, ‘Fire’s turnings: first, sea, and of sea half (is) earth and half ‘burner’”(Robinson 1991:27).¹⁵⁸ These changes are a type of modification that Vlastos argues for in his interpretation of Heraclitus. My discussion of modifications in Chapter Two takes modification as *tropai*. Fire’s *tropai*, Robinson explains, are “ultimate turning points” (Robinson 1991:98). In English, ‘trope’ from Greek *tropos*, from *trepein* ‘to turn’, is a figurative use of a word or expression (Soanes/Stevenson 2008:1546). In such instances, a trope is what a word turns into. Trope shifts word meaning into another meaning. Such examples of tropes are irony, metaphor and simile.

Boustrophedon writing is related to trope. *Boustrophedon* is literally ‘as an ox turns in ploughing’. This is writing “by the *turning of the ox*” (Derrida 1997:288). *Boustrophedon*, which Derrida refers to in a discussion of the economy of writing in Of Grammatology, also has *tropos* as its root, Derrida

¹⁵⁸ ‘Burner’ here is from *prester*, which is often translated as ‘lightning bolt’ or ‘lightning storm’. *Prester* refers to a downward force that I posit could mean gravity. In fragment 31b Robinson translates *logos* as ‘proportion’, ‘Sea is poured forth (from earth), and is measured in the same proportion as existed before it became earth’ (Robinson 1991:27). I believe that these two fragments could have to do with ocean tides. As the tides turn, the sea changes to become earth in regular intervals in a constant rhythm.

explains. In *boustrophedon* writing, “at the end of the line travelled from left to right, one resumes from right to left.” The ploughman, having “arrived at the end of the furrow...does not return to the point of departure. He turns ox and plough around. And proceeds in the opposite direction.” This has the same motion as fire’s *tropai* or ultimate turning points.

Building on Vlastos’ discussion of modifications, in Heraclitus, opposites are ultimate turning points. An opposite turns into its opposite at each point. This is the modification in Fragment B50, in which call becomes response and response becomes call. For Heraclitus, *logos* is the flow, which Bradley defines as rhythm over time (Bradley 2009:6) *Logos* shifts according to fire’s *tropai* or ultimate turning points.

Flow between contrasts or turning points along with a steady pulsation creates a sense of tension. Constant changing or turning interrupts and brings tension to the flow among *logos*, listener and speaker. This is an interruptive difference that breaks with self-presence that I discussed in Chapters Two, Three and Four. The break with immediacy in *se toucher toi* and the spacing of Nancean resonance interrupt self-presence. By breaking with immediacy, rhythm gives *logos* tension. In this way, the interruption is also immediacy because it results in this tension.

Chaplin’s gags, I will argue, have an active tension running through them that adheres to a rhythmic beat. In *Sunnyside*, we have seen, a change in emotional complexity is held together by a steady pulsation running through the scene. This change occurs when Chaplin leaves through the front gate, expressing the Tramp’s disappointment and forsakenness. In *The Immigrant*, the Tramp

synchronises his movements to offset the motion of a ship at sea. Using the tension in this way, he tries to adjust to the sea's turbulent movement. Unlike his fellow seasick passengers, the Tramp adapts to and even uses the sea's rhythm to his advantage. French pantomime artist, Max Linder, on the other hand, finds it impossible to steady himself on a pair of ice skates in his film, *Les débuts d'un patineur* (Gasnier 1907). Throughout the film, Max succumbs to gravity many times. Unable to get any sort of a foothold, he finally gives up and weeps pathetically. Any possible tension falls flat, and this for Linder, is the gag. Chaplin does not explore ice-skating in his repertoire, but if he did, he would develop a gag out of the Tramp's attempts not to fall onto the ice. He would do this while maintaining his dignity through the Tramp's gestures, costume and mannerisms.

Keaton, however, strives to conquer natural forces. In Chapter Two, I explored this tendency of Keaton's, in which he challenges forces such as gravity and extreme weather. Keaton uses the environment as a source of gags (Knopf 1999:123), and he uses his body to upset any equilibrium between himself and the environment. Gerald Mast summarises how Keaton stretches the laws of nature (Mast 1979:126):

When Keaton takes a fall, his body doesn't merely fall. It lifts itself several feet into the air and then hurls itself down onto the ground. When he does a flip, his body doesn't merely flip. It leaps into the air, tautens itself into planklike stiffness, then tucks in its knees and tumbles over itself in mid-air. The Keaton body is alternately, indeed simultaneously,

both elastic and bone, the most malleable and the most tensile of physical substances.

Keaton is “constantly thinking of ingenious but ridiculous situations to try to get himself out of trouble and solve problems, but it doesn’t quite work.”¹⁶⁰ Keaton’s *The Boat* (Keaton/Cline 1921)¹⁶¹ is “a comedy disaster film” in which an exuberant hobbyist builds a boat in his basement. When he takes his wife and two sons on a boat voyage, the situation goes beyond his control. The whole set revolves as the boat rolls in circles. Keaton nails his shoes to the floor to steady himself.¹⁶² The boat rocks continuously, yet, Keaton and family sit down to a meal, which is a disaster. None of Keaton’s solutions work to remedy the problems they are meant to solve and often cause new problems to emerge. Keaton pushes the situation to the limits of reality, rather than playing on the tension in the situation, as Chaplin does. While Keaton and Linder use rhythm in their gags, it is their characters’ movement against and contrary to the rhythm that makes the gags work. Chaplin’s gags maintain a tension active amid the steady pulsation that is his beat. His contemporaries, like Keaton and Linder, do not achieve this pulse and tension.

¹⁶⁰ From Joseph McBride’s commentary to *The Boat* in: *Buster Keaton: The Complete Short Films 1917-1923 Disc 3*, Eureka!

¹⁶¹ *The Boat* is a precursor to Keaton’s film *The Navigator* (Crisp/Keaton 1924), a larger scaled version of a similar theme.

¹⁶² Much of *The Boat* was shot using a studio set with rockers and the technique of tilting the camera (McBride 2006).

5.6.2 Turning Points in Plato

Derrida claims writing is more originary than speech, thus writing precedes and makes possible speech. Writing, he maintains, is spacing that sets aside *logos* from itself. Writing as spacing is a kind of forgetting that takes the place of good memory. Speech, however, Plato argues, is the remembering of *logos*. Derrida explains speech is privileged in a logocentric tradition because speaker, listener and word have immediate proximity. A speaker hears its self speak at the same time that it speaks. This means the elimination of temporal and spatial distance. Writing has difference in its spacing and alterity. What makes speech written in memory, I argue, is the rhythm of the poetic mode that Plato disparages.

Rhythm is constitutive of speech. *L'entente* uses rhythm to understand and hear meaning. *L'écoute* is immediate because it resounds and turns back meaning to itself, but its self as other and not self-presence. Back-turning gives rhythm to *logos*. As Wachsmann, Agawu, Arom and Bradley tell us, rhythm speaks. I believe rhythm precedes and makes possible both speech and writing, and that listening makes rhythm spoken or written.

Chapter Three of this thesis included a description of Plato's attacks on the poetic mode, oral tradition and self-identification. This includes a splitting of the self and other, thus disconnecting and cancelling identification with an object. Splitting was key in establishing "self-conscious separation" (Havelock 1963:201). In Republic Book Seven (489d), Plato mocks the rhyme favoured by rhetoricians. He says the poetic state of mind is an enemy because it is removed from reality. I argue rhythm is also discernible in the parable of the cave (514a-517d). One of the parable's oppositions is between cave rhythm and outside

rhythm. In this section, rhythm inside the cave is interrupted as light from actual fire projects shadows on a wall. The constructed actual fire is a substitute for the sun and the sun's rhythm only discernible outside the cave or at the cave entrance. Inside the cave, only actual firelight is generated. "The visible realm should be likened to the prison dwelling, and the light of the fire inside it to the power of the sun."¹⁶³ As the prisoner leaves the cave and leaves an existence in slavery, he comes into the rhythm or fire (*pur*), manifest in sunlight (Republic 516a):

At first, he'd see shadows most easily, then images of men and other things in water, then the things themselves. Of these, he'd be able to study the things in the sky and the sky itself more easily at night, looking at the light of the stars and the moon, than during the day, looking at the sun and the light of the sun.

Outside the cave, he is able to see the sun itself. He can study how the sun's light moves in its daily and seasonal rhythms (Republic 516b):

And at this point he would infer and conclude that the sun provides the seasons and the years, governs everything in the visible world, and is in some way the cause of all the things that he used to see.

In leaving the cave, Socrates dismisses the constructed rhythm of poetic statement and the illusion that actual fire projects inside the cave. Bringing himself into the light, I claim, is a coming into rhythm. Light in the intelligible

¹⁶³ Republic (517b)

realm brings truth and understanding. That is, light with rhythm brings truth and understanding. Rhythm is an “upward journey of the soul to the intelligible realm.”¹⁶⁴ In this reading, Plato’s call for knowledge of things as they really are outside of the cave is an argument in support of my reading of rhythm as *pur tropai* or turning points of fire (*pur*) manifest in the constantly changing light from the sky.

5.6.3 Desire for Rhythm

Listening, I have established, by way of the diunital relation of *l’écoute* and *l’entente*, is connected to a shifting *logos* via constantly changing rhythm, tension and flow. If listening is connected with a shifting *logos*, then is the problem of listening that I opened in Chapter One the desire to catch hold of *logos*? Wittgenstein examines a burning flame and ponders its mystery and impalpability (Wittgenstein et al., 2007:23):

Isn’t flame mysterious because it is impalpable? All right - but why does that make it mysterious? Why should something impalpable be more mysterious than something palpable? Unless it’s because we want to catch hold of it.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Republic (517b)

¹⁶⁵ This passage appeared in Zettel, first published in 1967 translated by G.E.M. Anscombe. Zettel is a collection of notes written on slips of paper compiled by Wittgenstein in a box file. These slips have shed considerable light on Wittgenstein’s main works. Wittgenstein, L., Anscombe, G. E. M. & Wright, G. H. V. 2007. Zettel, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Logocentric thinking is a reaching for *logos* as a centre. The *logos* it aspires to catch hold of, however, is shifting. Though the notion of a constant presence is appealing, “The human desire to posit a ‘central’ presence” (Spivak 1976:lxix;lxviii), whether there was or “there never was a centre” (Kearney 1984:116) is this “longing for a center” (Spivak 1997:lxix) or centrism itself. Is logocentric thinking a longing to hold onto an untouchable presence? I suggest instead, logocentric thinking, which places priority on spoken or written word is more a desire for rhythm than for a fixed, constant presence.

Speech, I say in the current chapter, carries rhythm and rhythm is constituted in speech. As I have discussed in previous chapters, listening resounds in that it is the return of meaning to a self that is other. To listen to the rhythm in speech therefore, is to listen to oneself as other. In this way, rhythm requires *l’écoute*. *L’entente*, I have argued is always already *l’écoute*. Chapter Four takes into account Nancy’s response to Derrida’s neglect of *l’écoute*. Likewise, in the current chapter, I consider the thinness of Derrida’s discussion of rhythm because he seems to miss the connection between rhythm and speech. In my reading of Plato, rhythm exposes what has been concealed about listening – that listening is, like *se toucher toi*, immediate and non-present, continuous and interrupted, sensible and intelligible, *l’écoute* and *l’entente*. In other words, *l’écoute* and *l’entente* are diunitally separate and connected at the same time.

An investigation into Chaplin’s use of rhythm also reveals a diunital relation in listening. Why then, if speech comes from rhythm, and if, as Bradley argues, rhythm speaks (Bradley 2009:6) does the Tramp not speak? Chaplin does not speak as the Tramp character because his listening (*s’écouter*) is, as Nancy says

of rhythm, beyond *l'entente*, “beyond harmony” or agreement (Nancy 2007:32). *L'entente* is understanding speech, and speech comes from rhythm, but *l'entente* alone is not listening. Listening is resonance, touching (*se toucher toi*), *l'entente* and rhythm. Nancy’s sonorous place is “a place that becomes a subject insofar as sound resounds there,” and not where a subject makes itself heard (Nancy 2007:17).

5.6.4 An Uncomfortable Diunitality

This discussion of rhythm reveals *logos* as shifting, changing and flowing like liquid or like sand.¹⁶⁶ The movement of a sea, its flux, continuity and crosscurrent evokes fragmentation in liquidity. Benveniste, as I have discussed in this chapter, prefers not to relate rhythm (*rythmos*) to the movement of the sea. For Benveniste, *rhythmos* “never applied to the regular movement of the waves...” (Benveniste 1971:285;287). Are we merely making metaphors when we speak of rhythm in respect to the waves of the sea?

A sea-related metaphor for the illusion of or desire for self-present meaning in logocentric thinking could be the condition of *mal de mer* or seasickness that was portrayed in Chaplin’s *The Immigrant*. *Mal de mer* is an uncomfortable diunitality, when one sees oneself as motionless, and yet feels that one is in motion, giving rise to a feeling of nausea. This is akin to a self-interrupting self-referral or auto-affection. Rather than hearing oneself speak, one feels oneself in motion. In rough seas, one feels stillness while the inner ear detects the vessel’s motion. To override these crossed signals, holding one’s gaze on a fixed object in

¹⁶⁶ “On Being Light and Liquid,” in: *Liquid Modernity* (Bauman 2000:1-15)

the distance, such as the horizon, helps to stabilize the inner ear and to regain one's equilibrium.

Chaplin has no need for a method to affix his eyes on a stable position. Unlike the other characters aboard the steamer, the Tramp does not succumb to this uncomfortable condition. For Chaplin, everything flows.¹⁶⁷ His flow, as Bradley defines it is “rhythm over time” (Bradley 2009:32). He attunes his flow to the rhythm of the sea's movements. He does this through referring back meaning to himself as other and therefore, listening to his self as other (*s'écouter*). Chaplin, in this way, avoids succumbing to a self-referral. By adapting the signature Tramp walk to balance himself, he rhymes his walk with the steamer's rocking, thus overcoming the threat of seasickness.

5.7 Conclusion: Rhythm Speaks

I have illustrated Chaplin's flow – rhythm over time - in this chapter through a series of film examples featuring the Tramp. In these films, Chaplin forms and deviates from a rhythmic pattern. This is particularly evident in the final scene of *Modern Times*, in which he sings a song without words in a rare moment of vocalisation as the Tramp. Telling a story using only the rhythm of the music to convey meaning through rhyme and gibberish, Chaplin illustrates the communicative potential of rhythm. I have argued throughout this chapter that

¹⁶⁷ Or *panta rhei*, see note 91. *Panta rhei*, which in Greek means, ‘everything flowing’ or ‘everything flows’ is often attributed to Heraclitus, for whom constant change or unity of change is a recurring theme. Plato credits Heraclitus with a theory of universal flux in the *Cratylus* (401d, 402a) and the *Theaetetus* (160d). Plato recalls an analogy of a river and “unity amidst change” (Robinson 1991:83-84).

rhythm speaks when words cannot. Singing in the last scene he made with the Tramp, Chaplin gives a demonstration of this argument. His rhythm creates flow among *logos*, audience and himself.

The Gamin writes down the words to the song for the Tramp because he cannot remember them. When the cuff is lost, he cannot retrieve the song lyrics. With the musical accompaniment playing behind him, he finds something else instead. Listening to the rhythm of the music, the Tramp remembers the song. The song he sings is intelligible, yet its words are gibberish. Listening to the *logos*, his gibberish tells a story through rhythm rather than through words.

The Tramp's restaurant audience in the *Modern Times* scene laughs at every punch line at the end of each verse as he rhymes the lines. Rhyme, as discussed in this chapter, is dependent on audience listening. I have discussed several examples from Chaplin's work in which he uses rhyme. My discussion of Chaplin's use of rhyme in his silent films illustrates that rhythm must be listened to (*à l'écoute*) in order to be understood. One way that Chaplin does this is by keeping the beat with a steady pulsation interjected by "moments of calculated rhythmic surprise" carried through rhyme, flow and tension (Bradley 2009:6). In this way, he does "the unexpected in a novel way" (Chaplin 1918:134-137). Rhyme expands and creates language's meaning. The restaurant audience in *Modern Times* does not understand the song through hearing the rhythm. Nor does the Tramp remember the song by hearing the rhythm being played by the band. They understand through the rhymes that punctuate the lines in each verse. The audience listens to rhyme, thereby creating meaning through this expansion

of language. In this way, the Tramp's rhythm does not require intelligible speech. For Chaplin, rhythm speaks.

The talkies brought synchronization of dialogue and image by way of a soundtrack wedded directly with the film. This audio was amplified in cinemas in synchrony with the images on the screen. As the voice was in absolute proximity to the speaker on the screen, the talkies created auto-affection. The Tramp's vocalisations, however, show us that rhythm constitutes speech. As one listens to speech and its rhythm, this rhythm requires *l'écoute*. This is because listening to rhythm is listening to oneself as other. In order to understand speech, *l'entente* is necessary. With speech coming from rhythm, however, *l'entente* is always already *l'écoute*.

As the Tramp sings, he manages to speak without repeating anything as he listens to the rhythm and sings. If, as Plato argues, *logos* is remembered through speech and rhythm makes narrative memorable, then speech inscribes itself in memory through rhythm. My reading of Plato's cave allegory brings knowledge of the world and sunlight together with rhythm.

Do the early talkies use speech without memory as a kind of writing? The Gamin's written words, mere simulacra of the song's lyrics, represent the talkies revolution with its emphasis on repeated speech. With their dialogue synchronized in space and time, the early talkies offered repetition. In Derrida's argument, hearing or understanding oneself speak (*s'entendre-parler*) is immediate self-presence, while writing does not have immediate proximity between the writer and reader. Writing has difference. As Leonard Lawlor

describes, “In order for writing to be itself, it must be separated from the one who draws it” (Lawlor 2003:59).

As I have discussed in this chapter, Agawu and Arom argue for a conjunction of music and language. Language is constituted in rhythm and speech is constructed from rhythm. In this way, rhythm and listening work together. In order to understand speech as it is carried through rhythm, listening needs *l'écoute* and *l'entente*. Rhythm is constitutive of speech. Rhythm precedes and makes possible writing, as it does speech, and rhythm is spoken or written through listening. This is why the opposition between speech and listening is illusory. *L'entente* uses rhythm to understand and hear meaning. *L'écoute* is immediate because it resounds and turns back meaning to itself, but to its self as other and not as self-presence. This turning back of meaning gives rhythm to *logos*.

In this chapter, I have considered *logos* not as a central presence, but as movement connected to language and speech through rhythm. Heraclitus' treatment of *logos* supports my argument that speech has immediacy through rhythm. When this immediacy is broken, it results in tension. Heraclitean fragments disclose an unknown musical relation in Chapter Two that imparts a philosophy based on harmony and community. The return in this chapter to Heraclitean fragments reveals they are indicative of rhythm, connecting *logos* with constant change. This constant change and contrast, I argue constitutes tension in rhythm.

Through my reading of the fire fragments attributed to Heraclitus, I discussed the connection between *logos* and rhythm in terms of the turnings of fire. The movement of *logos* corresponds to Fire's turning points by way of the tension

between the immediacy of constant change, contrast and flow that I believe constitutes rhythm and the interruption between listeners and speakers. Fire's turning points have flow, contrast, tension and pulsation between them. In the movement of *logos*, listener and speaker both encounter *l'écoute* as they stretch toward meaning.

I have examined, throughout this thesis, Chaplin's relation to others through discussions of *ubuntu* as interdependency of people, harmony and rhythm. I will further consider this relation in the following chapter. In *ubuntu*, all people are interdependent as both individuals and as community. Chaplin expresses this communal identity, sharing agency with the audience, characters and objects in the film.

In Chapter Six, I will return to Ovid's fable of Echo and Narcissus. Echo's sovereign speech act does not undermine the curse. Echo resounds, referring back the call of the other to herself and turning around the privileging of identity that is her curse. Referring back to her self, but to her self as other, she speaks, not simply because she has a subject-position, but also because she has agency. By way of this agency, *s'écouter*, she achieves openness to other subjects. On the borders of identity and alterity, Echo listens to her audience as other and to her self as other.

The signing of Narcissus, or the ear of the other is as imperative for Echo to be understood as it is for the subaltern to speak. She does not speak, but merely reflects and repeats, showing that *l'entente* is not dependent on a living body. In resonance, Nancy states, the subject is "that part in the body" that listens (Nancy 2007:31). As a stone body, Echo has lost the part of the body that resounds. For

Spivak, the subaltern reflects the voice of the elite even in her most radical attempts to speak. Can it be possible for the subaltern, who is unable to speak by way of her not being heard or recognised, to sign her own love, to become a subject and to speak as both herself and as her audience through *s'écouter*?

By way of a discussion of the subaltern, love and community, I will illustrate how *l'entente* alone is not listening. Spivak argues the subaltern cannot represent herself. In Chapter Six, I will not propound a theory of listening as an alternative solution to the subaltern's "effort to the death to speak" (Spivak 1996:292). I ask if the subaltern can refer back to herself as other, thereby representing herself as other. How, although *l'entente* fails the subaltern, can she resound as Chaplin does, making her listening listened to? Chaplin, I will argue, does speak in the Spivakian sense, as the subaltern cannot. By representing the other, he also represents himself. As in *ubuntu*, Chaplin's relation does not privilege identity. His is a relation based on common identity. A scene from *The Circus* lends itself to an examination of Chaplin's relation with the audience. For Chaplin, the audience is always already a relation to others. I will show how, through hunger and dignity, his interrelation with the audience is a shared common identity.

Finally, in Chapter Six, I will address Nancy's question proposed at the start of this thesis, "Is listening something of which philosophy is capable" (Nancy 2007:1)? *L'entente* alone, however, is not listening. Philosophy can listen as *écoute* and *entente* if *l'écoute* and *l'entente* form a relation and not a distinction.

Chapter Six: Can the Subaltern Listen?

Chapter Five considers rhythm as a shifting foundation in which elements change in position. In Chapter Five, I discussed a shift in the meaning of *logos* from inter-relational, self-identifying, and emotional to a *logos* as word or reason. I considered the possibility that *logos* may refer to the rhythm within speech. I then argued that Chaplin's rhythm creates flow in this rhythmic account of *logos*. This flow is between his audience and himself.

In his films, Chaplin forms and deviates from rhythmic patterns in his relation with the audience. I argued that rhythm carries speech, which is imperative for *l'entente* in its understanding of speech. However, if speech comes from rhythm, and Chaplin has rhythm, why then does the Tramp not speak?

I examined rhyme, by way of examples from Chaplin's films, as dependent on audience listening. I argued that listening to rhyme expands language and creates meaning. This discussion of rhyme in Chaplin's work supports the argument that in order to be understood, rhythm requires listening (*l'écoute*). Therefore, *l'écoute* gives intelligibility and meaning to rhythm. As language is constituted in rhythm, rhythm then carries speech. Since the Tramp's rhythm speaks, Chaplin does not need to use intelligible speech in order to produce intelligibility. In this way, rhythm speaks when words cannot.

If he were to use the spoken word, I believe this would ruin *s'écouter*. With *s'écouter*, he makes his listening listened to, but if he used the spoken word, he would rely on *l'entente*. *L'entente* would sabotage Chaplin's relation with the audience, which depends on his referring back to himself as other. Chaplin, through *s'écouter*, listens to himself as other and as audience, and not as another self or a split self, but as a subject. Chaplin as a subject refers to himself and at

the same time resounds as other, which is to say, the audience. The audience is other and Chaplin refers back to himself as another subject. Referring back to his self as other, Chaplin's *s'écouter* is his non-self-present position.

Chaplin, I will show, relates to the audience through common identity and not through a privileging of identity. I will connect this aspect of Chaplin's work with the subaltern as discussed by Spivak. This rests on my discussion of Spivak's reading of Ovid's fable of Echo and Narcissus. Echo, sentenced to a life of silence, finds a way to speak via her relation with Narcissus. By way of *s'écouter*, she uses his call to refer back to her self. I discussed, in Chapter Three, how Echo, through listening to herself or *s'écouter*, before hearing or understanding herself (*s'entendre*), becomes her subject when she repeats and appropriates Narcissus' lines. In Spivak's reading, a difference and a deferment occur when Echo speaks independently of Narcissus's intention. Spivak reads Echo's eventual disembodiment as her loss of a subject-position. Echo reaches the point where she can only reflect the call of the other as hearing and understanding. When she is incapable of referring back to herself, she resembles the subaltern¹⁶⁸ from Spivak's work on subalternality in the essay, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (Spivak 1994:66-111).¹⁶⁹ In this chapter, I will develop my

¹⁶⁸ The term 'subaltern' was first referred to by the Italian Marxist political activist Antonio Gramsci in the article "Notes on Italian History," which later appeared in Prison Notebooks, written between 1929-1935. The concept of the subaltern refers to a 'low rank' person or group of people in a society dominated by a class of ruling elite (El Habib 2012:5).

¹⁶⁹ "Can the Subaltern Speak?" is based on a 1983 lecture, "Power and Desire." It was first published as an essay in: C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds.), Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture, Macmillan Education: Basingstoke, 1988, pp. 271-313. I cite the version in: Spivak, G. C. 1994. "Can the Subaltern Speak?"

work on Spivak's reading of Echo discussed in Chapter Three in order to explore how *l'écoute* can be possible in the subaltern failed by *l'entente*. Though the subaltern cannot make herself heard (*se faire entendre*), can she make her listening listened to (*écouter*)?¹⁷⁰

I will also return in this chapter, to Nancy's question posed in Chapter One, what kind of listening is philosophy capable of? After Heidegger's question of being and Derrida's question of difference, Nancy asks, is philosophy capable of listening? If so, then does philosophy have the means of listening only as *entente* or as *écoute*? Chaplin listens in a way that is at the same time an immediacy and - as Derrida describes *se toucher toi* - a "break with immediacy" (Derrida 2005a:293). As in previous chapters, the aim here is not to find a solution to, but to refine the notion of a problem of listening that I put forth in Chapter One.

6.1 Subaltern Consciousness and the Privileging of Identity

Spivak describes deconstruction in this way in a 1993 interview with Alfred Arteaga, "Deconstruction does not say there is no subject, there is no truth, there is no history. It simply questions the privileging of identity so that someone is believed to have the truth" (Landry/Maclean 1996:27). I have advanced the idea in Chapters Two and Five that Heraclitean fragments emphasize *palintropos*, a backward turning motion. These turnings, like Derrida's mention of

In: Williams, P. & Chrisman, L. (eds.) Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader, New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf. A later, revised version of this essay appeared as a chapter entitled, "History," in: Spivak, G.C., 1999. A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of The Vanishing Present, Cambridge, Mass & London: Harvard University Press. pp. 198-311.

¹⁷⁰ (Szendy 2008:5)

boustrophedon, imply a turning back similar to Spivak's description of the movement of deconstruction. In "The Setting to Work of Deconstruction" (Spivak 1999), Spivak describes Derrida's deconstruction as giving possibility to definitions that do not attend to antonyms involved in the pushing away of each opposite meaning from what it is not (Spivak 1999:423). Given this reading, deconstruction turns around this pushing away of meaning, thus constituting a *palintropos*, or turning back. I will examine how Spivak's question, "Can the subaltern speak?" (Spivak 1994:66) deconstructs the privileging of identity.

Spivak worked in the 1980s with the Subaltern Studies group, a collective of historians aiming to rewrite the history of colonial India "from the point of view of peasant insurgency" (Landry/Maclean 1996:203). Australia-based Indian historian and political economist, Ranajit Guha based the Subaltern Studies group on the claim that Indian history is written in an elitist, colonialist frame. Guha calls for scholars, using new material, to write a more authentic history of India. The group aimed to write a new history using the point of view of the poor and peasants in colonial Indian history. Guha considers the failure of the Indian people that kept the people subaltern and their struggle suppressed to be the central problem of colonial India's historiography (Said 1988:v-vii).

In Spivak's critique of Subaltern Studies, she argues these gaps in the historical record prevent the possibility of creating historical texts on the subaltern's point of view because all that has been documented comes from the other side (Landry/Maclean 1996:203). She believes the subaltern's view cannot be recovered and that the group is wrong to claim to establish subaltern consciousness since the only evidence of any discussion of subaltern

consciousness is carried through texts by counterinsurgency, authority and elites (Spivak 1996:212-213;226).

This is consonant with Edward Said's study of imperialism and culture. In his 1978 work Orientalism, Said propounds an awareness that "the persistence and the durability of saturating hegemonic systems" as culture put constraints on writers and thinkers that allow and encourage the production of a system of superiority and manipulation (Said 1991:12;14).¹⁷¹ He suggests an extended reading of texts in order to better understand this persistence and durability, taking account of imperialism and of the resistance to it (Said 1993:66-67). Said advises against the replacing of the missing narrative from official Indian history. The new narrative written by the Subaltern Studies group, as supplementary to the existing narrative, argues Said, could become "a mirror opposite the writing whose tyranny it disputes" (Said 1988:viii). A narrative mirroring the counterinsurgent or elite narrative would be tantamount to the further privileging of identity that Spivak prefers to deconstruct.

For Guha and the Subaltern Studies group, the identity of the subaltern is difference. Spivak maintains the subaltern defined as difference from the elite, "deviates from an ideal." In this way, the subaltern appears only when the thought of the elite appears (Spivak 1994:80) (Spivak 1999:272). The subaltern

¹⁷¹ Said points to views on race and imperialism found in the writing of "liberal cultural heroes." Even John Stuart Mill, for example, "made it clear in On Liberty and Representative Government that his views there could not be applied to India...because the Indians were civilizationally, if not racially, inferior" (Said 1991:14).

consciousness then, is a difference that has no identity because subaltern consciousness is the consciousness of the oppressors. Subaltern consciousness is “effaced even as it is disclosed” (Spivak 1996:212-213) (Spivak 2005:476).

6.2 Can Echo Speak?

“Can the Subaltern Speak?” (Spivak 1994) conveys the story of Bhubaneswari Bhaduri, who committed suicide in an effort to speak resistance. It was an attempt to inscribe on her body, “as if her body were a ‘literary’ text” (Spivak 2005:478), but this action failed as a speech act. “Even that incredible effort to speak did not fulfill itself in a speech act” (Landry/Maclean 1996:289). Speaking in this context is between the speaker and the listener (Spivak 1996:287). In this way, Spivak makes a distinction between Bhubaneswari’s “embodied act of writing and the failure to register this embodied articulation as a public act of representation or sovereign speech act” (Morton 2007:121).

Spivak’s subaltern cannot make a performative statement. Using the example of Bhubaneswari’s suicide as resistance against widow sacrifice in India, Spivak argues that the subaltern cannot speak because a speech act is not only speaking, but also hearing, which together make a speech act complete. Thus, by not being heard, the subaltern cannot perform a complete speech act (Landry/Maclean 1996:287) (Morton 2007:10;157).

Problems occur with “Can the Subaltern Speak” when ‘speak’ is taken literally as ‘talk’. Meghan Morris has said that Spivak’s critics seem to rewrite ‘the

subaltern cannot speak' as 'the subaltern cannot talk'.¹⁷² She is not concerned about the fact that an utterance is given. Spivak contends since the speech act cannot be complete without speaking and hearing, the phrase, 'the subaltern cannot speak' means the subaltern cannot be heard even when she "makes an effort to the death to speak" (Spivak 1996:289;291-292).

Can the subaltern, like Echo, only reflect the call of the other and never "sign her own name" (Derrida 2002)?¹⁷³ Echo's words, 'fly from me' reflect Narcissus's speech, which she does under the constraints of the gods' curse on her, stripping her of her agency so that she may only reflect the last words of others. In Ovid's fable, *She can't begin, but waits for the Rebound, To catch his voice, and to return the Sound*.¹⁷⁴ I have argued that Echo, however, does not merely repeat Narcissus's lines. For Derrida, Echo, in order to woo Narcissus, repeats and by that means, also appropriates Narcissus's words and comes out with something else (Derrida 2005b:xi-xii). "Echo lets be heard by whoever wants to hear it, by whoever might love hearing it, something other than what she seems to be saying" (Derrida 2005b:xii). Narcissus's 'Why do you fly from me?' becomes Echo's 'Fly from me.' Speaking independently, if only for a brief moment, from her punishment and apart from Narcissus's intention (Spivak 1993:183-185),

¹⁷² In "Subaltern Talk: Interview with the Editors" (29 October 1993), Spivak relates an anecdote implying that Meaghan Morris has made this point in: Donna Landry and Gerald Maclean (eds) 1996. The Spivak Reader: Selected Words of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, NY & London: Routledge. pp 289.

¹⁷³ From *Derrida*, a film directed by Kirby Dick & Amy Ziering, 2002, Zeitgeist Films.

¹⁷⁴ Ovid, 1992. Ovid's metamorphoses in fifteen books. Translated by the most Eminent Hands, Cambridge, UK: Chadwyck-Healey.

Echo communicates with Narcissus and “she signs her own love” (Derrida 2002).

The angry goddess, Juno dealt Echo a penalty designed to strip her of her agency by removing Echo’s power to speak first. In line with her punishment, Echo returns ‘Come!’ to Narcissus’s ‘Come.’ In the following line, ‘Fly from me’, Echo appropriates the words of Narcissus, reclaims her agency, and thereby foils Juno. Derrida considers what gives rise to this subterfuge. What “turns around a call to come (*à venir*)...” he posits, is love. Love “at the intersection of repetition and the unforeseeable,” is new each time, so that “one does not see *coming* what remains *to come*” (Derrida 2005b:xii).

Though Echo cannot see what is to come, her speech act is complete in that her voice is spoken and heard. Spivak interprets this as Echo’s development as an autonomous subject by way of her sovereign speech act. Echo undermines the curse that the goddess imposed upon her, and thus, turning around a privileging of identity to make it work in her favour.

I have related Echo’s call to Narcissus with Nancy’s notion of resonance in Chapter Three. While Spivak’s approach favours an autonomous subject whose voice is heard, for Nancy, the subject refers to a self, but one that he situates as a “sonorous present,” with access to self and not self-presence (Nancy 2007:12-13). Nancy considers that “the subject of the listening or the subject who is listening...is perhaps no subject at all, except as the place of resonance” (Nancy 2007:21-22). Echo, at the start of the fable, has subjectivity, but loses it when the goddess curses her, thus rescinding her position as subject. Echo, however, finds a reserve of autonomy in that she does have some capacity for her own speech

when she discovers a way of corresponding with Narcissus. Nancy would say she resounds. In Ovid's fable, Echo does 'resound'. Echo resounds, listening to herself (*s'écouter*) before hearing/understanding herself (*s'entendre*). This is to say that Echo is a sonorous body that resounds as she listens and her resonance is a referring back of the call of the other to herself. She maintains autonomy in her resounding. Her effort to speak is realised, unlike Bhubaneswari from "Can the Subaltern Speak" (Spivak 1994:66-111), who could not, despite her inscription on her body in suicide, become a subject. She cannot speak because she has no subject-position, no agency and no voice.

Echo must make Narcissus understand because he is her last chance at agency. She does not know at this point that in the next stage of her punishment, she will lose her body and with it, her subjectivity. When her subjectivity and body are removed, Echo loses her agency and any chance of finding it again. While she still can, she appropriates Narcissus's words to make them her words, but she cannot choose her words. Echo can speak only the ends of his lines. Derrida calls this correspondence blind because Narcissus is blind to anyone but his own reflection and Echo speaks blindly, obliviously. Visibility may not be necessary for this correspondence, but how, Derrida asks, can two blind people love each other?¹⁷⁵ Is it enough to be two subject-positions?

Chaplin, however, listens to himself as other and as audience. He is not simply a subject. He is a "sonorous presence." Like Chaplin, Echo speaks in her own

¹⁷⁵ From *Derrida*, a film directed by Kirby Dick & Amy Ziering, 2002, Zeitgeist Films.

voice for her self and as another, becoming her self despite the goddess' curse and notwithstanding Narcissus's intention. The goddess has not destroyed Echo's sonority, only her capacity to choose her own words. The call to come arrives not to Echo's self, but to Echo's sonorous body. She uses Narcissus's words to speak and thus, her punishment fails. The subaltern, as Spivak argues, cannot do this. The subaltern's body has no subject-position. As Nancy would say, she has no sonorous presence. As a sonorous presence, Chaplin is a subject who is listening and resounding, thereby referring back to himself as other. In this way, he does not refer to the audience as himself. For Chaplin, the audience is another player in the film, working in antiphony, resonance, rhythm and diunital relations.

In Derrida's reading, Echo deceives the gods by pretending to repeat the end of Narcissus's sentences and thus manages to declare her love (Derrida 2005a:291). Echo finds a way to "take back the initiative" of responding to Narcissus's call (Derrida 2005b:xi-xii). She turns around the call to come and breaks with immediacy by not echoing Narcissus. By appropriating the call of her audience (Narcissus), Echo manages to respond as her self and as other. She defies the gods by stretching toward and disclosing meaning. As a result, Narcissus hears her speak in her own voice when Echo resounds his lines. Referring back to her self, but to her self as other, she speaks, not simply because she has a subject-position, but also because she has agency and voice. By way of this agency, *s'écouter*, she achieves openness to other subjects. "To be listening is always to be on the edge of meaning..." (Nancy 2007:6). On the borders of identity and alterity, she listens to her audience as other and to her self as other.

She echoes him, but also calls “untranslatably”, her love overflowing the calls of Narcissus. Derrida discusses the untranslatable in The Ear of the Other (Derrida 1985), “Translation has nothing to do with reception or communication or information.” Translation never succeeds. It promises reconciliation, of which Echo and Narcissus find none (Derrida 1985:122-123). Echo’s calls to Narcissus are heard, though in the end, *l’entente* fails them both as Echo’s calls are lost on Narcissus, who understands her love as something else entirely (Derrida 2005b:xi-xii). He is helpless to translate her call or her call into love. Derrida believes, translation augments and modifies the original to ensure its survival, “which is to say the growth, of the original” (Derrida 1985:122). Echo’s own translation of Narcissus’s original calls survives momentarily, but gives Narcissus no understanding of Echo’s love.

Narcissus, plighted by the inability to see anyone but his own reflection, hears and does not understand her. Although Spivak deems them status as two subject-positions who exchange (Spivak 1993:185), this does not bring the two together. In order for Narcissus to translate Echo’s call, the exchange must be more than *l’entente*. Echo signs her love, directed toward Narcissus, but Derrida tells us, “it is the ear of the other that signs” (Derrida 1985:51) because without the other, when one hears oneself speak at the same time as one speaks, the speaker, spoken word and listener are in immediate proximity and there is self-presentation of meaning. Narcissus can only read. He cannot sign. The signing of Narcissus, or the ear of the other is as imperative for Echo to be understood as it is for the subaltern to speak.

6.3 Intellectuals and Power

Subalternity, according to Spivak “is not about subjects. It is about agency and about “a position without identity” (Spivak, et al. 2006:74) (Spivak 2005:476). Spivak argues in ‘Can the Subaltern Speak’? that critiques of the Western subject by contemporary French philosophers perpetuate “the subject of the West, or the West as subject” (Spivak 1999:248). Stephen Morton explains, Spivak detects complicity between Western global economic interests and European colonialism (Morton 2007:106). Regarding the text in question, “Intellectuals and Power: a conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze” (Foucault 1977:205-17),¹⁷⁶ Spivak argues critiques of subjectivity and of the sovereign subject that were popular during the 1980s effectively initiate a subject, rather than evaluate it (Spivak 1999:248).

Hallward argues in “The One or the Other: French philosophy today” (Hallward 2003:1-32), French philosophy is oriented around a singular concept of individuation that favours a self-grounding subject or subject without an object. He attributes non-relationality in French philosophy to a tendency to critique the Cartesian cogito, in which a subject is not in relation to an object (Hallward 2003:3;21).

Nancy sees a return of the traditional subject of metaphysics in contemporary theory. In “The Persistence of the Subject” (James 2002), James describes Nancy’s observation of the persistence of the subject despite theoretical

¹⁷⁶ From Michel Foucault, Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected essays and interviews, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon, Cornell University Press: Ithaca, NY, 1977, pp. 205-17.

discourse against it (James 2002:129). The subject does persist in Nancy's later work, such as Listening (Nancy 2007) in which he maintains the subject is the listening part in the body (Nancy 2007:21-22) and later states the subject "...is perhaps no subject at all, except as the place of resonance..." (Nancy 2007:31). In his critique of the re-grounding of the subjective, in Ego Sum (Nancy 1979), Nancy deems suspicious any mention of the subject, "the Subject," arguing that the Subject 'governs the world' (James 2002:130) (Nancy 1979:125-127). Nancy argues that contemporary theoretical discourse, such as Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, that seeks to overturn the subject, merely re-grounds or persists in the grounding of the subject. Nancy breaks down Lacan's account of subjectivity via a critique of the Cartesian *cogito*. For Nancy, the self-grounding, self-positing subject that echoes nothing but itself resurfaces in Lacanian psychoanalysis. (Nancy 1979:125-127).

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, commenting on the prevalence of European philosophical discourse on the question of the subject, targets this work of Nancy's. In "The Echo of the Subject" (Lacoue-Labarthe 1989:139-207), Lacoue-Labarthe opines, "Everywhere, this obsession with the subject leads or threatens to lead to 'madness'," citing not only Nietzsche, but also Nancy's early work on the question of the subject.¹⁷⁷ Most notably, he mentions Nancy's Le Discours de la syncope (Nancy 1976), Ego Sum (Nancy 1979), and The Literary Absolute (Lacoue-Labarthe/Nancy 1988) (Lacoue-Labarthe 1989:142-144).

¹⁷⁷ Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe worked closely together throughout the 1980s, co-authoring several texts, including, *The Literary Absolute*. The pair also founded the Centre de recherches philosophiques sur le politique in 1980.

Derrida recognises the other within the subject and develops his *différance*, the spatializing and temporalizing movement discussed in Chapter Three. He criticizes Husserlian subjectivity as a Western theological idea of a presence to self that is immediate to itself. Derrida, however, sees non-presence in self-presence, differentiating the self into a ‘me and myself’, which has no immediate presence of self.

The self is a subject in terms of relation to others, but is “not completely dissolved into an object,” explains Chuckwudum B. Okolo in his discussion of African metaphysics (Okolo 2003:214). I now turn to the problems encountered in the notion of the self in an African metaphysics of reality, which resembles an altered version of Descartes’s *cogito*, ‘I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am’ (Mbiti 1969:108). In this scenario, the self is social, a “person-in-relation-to-others” and community makes the individual real only through relationships with others in a community. Without community, an individual has no existence. This is the spirit of *ubuntu* that I discussed in Chapter Four, in which all individuals are interdependent as a community and form self-identity interdependently through community (Battle/Tutu 2009:1-2). In *ubuntu*, identity cannot be separated from community, and identity is therefore not privileged. As a result, Okolo argues, the status of self as an independent subject becomes problematic (Okolo 2003:213). He recognises a double status of individual existence in African philosophy involving both subject and object, in which the subject is almost totally accounted for in terms of relation to others.

In this thesis, I have shown how Chaplin too accounts for the subject in terms of relation to others. I have examined the interrelationship between Chaplin, the

film and the audience through dialogue, resonance and flow, in which he and the audience are connected and not separated, but they are not the same. He and the audience share a connection without the burden of identity. As they connect, the audience identifies and transforms, becoming an agent in Chaplin's gags rather than a liability. I illustrated aspects of the interrelationship between Chaplin and the film in Chapter Four with Zupančič's reading of the chicken scene in *The Gold Rush*, in which she discusses Chaplin's connection with the chicken. Zupančič contends the chicken realises that it is Chaplin (Zupančič 2008:20), but they are not the same. The gag works because Chaplin speaks through a chickenish voice to convince the audience of Big Jim's hallucination. What Zupančič means is that Chaplin does not adopt chicken-like characteristics, rather he realises and reveals his own chickenishness. The gag does not entail Chaplin's complete emotional identification with a chicken, as a method actor would approach the scene.¹⁷⁸ What Chaplin, the audience, Big Jim, the Tramp and the chicken mutually identify with is the notion of hunger and what it means to feel hunger. Chaplin exploits this understanding to make people laugh. In this way, he uses identification, not in an identitarian sense and not as an antipode to difference. He constructs an identity not based on privileging, but on relation.

Spivak uses the account of Bhubaneswari's suicide and of widow immolation in India¹⁷⁹ to deconstruct privilege of identity. Spivak censures Foucault and

¹⁷⁸ Method acting or the Method was developed by Russian theatre director Constantin Stanislavsky and embraced by Lee Strasberg and the Actors' Studio in New York in the 1930s. In the Method, "the actor's job is not to become someone else but to become himself" (Bray 2008).

¹⁷⁹ *Sati*, widow burning in India is an upper-cast Hindu practice in which the

Deleuze for their unwillingness to access the other as subject (Spivak 1994:78;80) (Spivak 1999:268). Deleuze speaks of a “...necessity for confined individuals to speak for themselves, to create a relay” (Foucault 1977:206). In Spivak’s critique, Foucault and Deleuze opine, the oppressed¹⁸⁰ “can speak and know their conditions” (Spivak 1999:269). Spivak accuses intellectuals of trying to represent subalterns as self-knowing and politically clever. She asks how intellectuals can represent the subaltern without representing themselves, “The ventriloquism of the speaking subaltern is the left intellectual’s stock-in-trade.” (Spivak 1999:255;257).

Chaplin neither speaks for nor represents the subaltern. He expresses a common relation. This is the identity of hunger that he shares with Big Jim. By way of the chicken gag, Chaplin shares the identity of hunger with the audience as well. The audience does not simply reach an understanding (*l’entente*) of the Tramp’s hunger or Big Jim’s hunger. Chaplin’s expertise in playing to an audience knows that the audience will return laughter at the Tramp’s situation. This constitutes his attempt to maintain dignity despite being chased by Big Jim as a potential meal and despite his appearance as a very large chicken. We see the Tramp

widow takes her own life in this method in her duty as “a virtuous wife” (Mani 1998:1). According to Lata Mani (1998), the debate on *sati* was a debate between colonial and counter-colonial discourses. Mani argues the colonial discourse that shaped the debate favoured brahmanic scriptures and traditions that made women burned in sati neither subject nor object of the debate, but a “site for the contestation of tradition” (Mani 1998:1-2).

¹⁸⁰ It is not always clear whom Spivak is discussing in reference to the Foucault/Deleuze conversation, as she seems to interchange the subaltern with the oppressed, the confined, prisoners, peasants and the masses (Spivak 1994:78;84).

hiding the knife from Big Jim. Then, running out of the shack into the snow, still as a chicken, trying to reason with Big Jim, Chaplin performs his mantra, to be “desperately serious in my attempt to appear as a normal little gentleman...no matter how desperate the predicament is” (Chaplin 1918:134). He uses a striving for dignity to express an identity of hunger that the audience returns as common identity. Unlike the intellectuals in Spivak’s discussion of the subaltern, Chaplin knows he must represent himself when he represents the other and he represents the other when representing himself. This is his expression of common identity. He has no use for Cartesian *cogito*. In the spirit of *ubuntu*, the Tramp exists because the audience identifies. The film exists because the Tramp and the audience relate in this way.

Not only does Spivak rebuke intellectuals for their non-relational, ventriloquist approach to the subaltern and the oppressed, she accuses Foucault and Deleuze of complicity in Western global economic interests of and in European colonialism (Morton 2007:106). She sharply criticises Foucault and Deleuze for ignoring imperialism, the international division of labour and the exploitation of subaltern women, and yet at the end of the conversation, discussing “third world issues” (Spivak 1999:277). In the subaltern “on the other side of the international division of labour,” agency and voice are prevented from being represented by historical, economic and geopolitical conditions (Morton 2007:110). Spivak discusses Marx’s work on French agrarian peasant smallholders’ understanding of themselves as a class as constative, and not performative (Spivak 2005:476). This is because peasants’ self-description as a class cannot be recognized in terms of being a meaningful speech act. Thus, their agency is not recognized (Morton 2007:110).

6.4 A Failure of *L'Entente*

After Echo's body turns to stone, she no longer resounds. She becomes a surface that vibrations collide with and reflect off of, reflecting vibrations that prolong and intensify, like snow that reflects light. Echo throws back a signal, outside of no body, combining with no others and referring no meaning to any self because she has no subject-position, no agency and no voice. She does not speak, but merely reflects and repeats, showing that *l'entente* is not dependent on a living body. In resonance, Nancy states, the subject is "that part in the body" that listens (Nancy 2007:31). As a stone body, Echo has lost the part of the body that resounds.

If Echo could resound again, Narcissus might recognise her. Like Echo, the subaltern can be understood (*l'entente*), but she cannot speak because she has no subject-position, no agency and no voice. She reflects the voice of the elite even in her most radical attempts to speak. Can it be possible for the subaltern, who is unable to speak by way of her not being heard or recognised, to sign her own love, to become a subject and to speak as both herself and as her audience through *s'écouter*? In other words, if the subaltern were to combine other vibrations with her own and to resound, would she discover a possibility for recognition in being listened to?

Following this discussion of the recognition of the subaltern as a subject, I will now suggest how love can work with intersubjectivity. I surmise the dormant or as Derrida says, "blind" love between Echo and Narcissus is an attempt at a political concept of love on which Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri base their political projects in Commonwealth (Hardt/Negri 2009) and in Multitude

(Hardt/Negri 2004). This is a love that is “generous,” “unrestrained” and as strong as death.” Could love, however, fail Hardt and Negri just as *l’entente* fails Echo or the subaltern (Hardt/Negri 2004:351-2;356;358)?

6.5 Love as Agency of the Common

Hardt sees love as a political process in the construction of a democratic society. A democracy based on a political concept of love, Hardt says, creates a space for differences to interact. Love preserves differences and fosters interaction among singularities and this will increase the “powers to think and act together with relationship to others.”¹⁸¹ This is not the same as love of country or as Spivak describes, “the love of mother tongue, the love of my little corner of ground” (Spivak 2009:79). Spivak questions how this love of mother tongue changes to become nationalism, love of one’s country. As Spivak observed, working with Indian aboriginals, this “rock bottom comfort in one’s language and one’s home with which nationalism” can be a negative effect when the comfort is taken away and no nation-state remains (Spivak 2009:79).

Hardt and Negri want to use love to investigate “the power and productivity of the common” (Hardt/Negri 2009:xi-xii). They define love as a process that produces the common and constructs subjectivity (Hardt/Negri 2009:180). Negri, in Time for Revolution (Negri 2003), argues love is in practice, the common and, love is also a demand of poverty. Poverty then, constitutes the common, while

¹⁸¹ Michael Hardt speaking at the European Graduate School, 2007. <http://www.egs.edu>

love constructs the common. He maintains a relation between love and poverty that is creative and subjective (Negri 2003:208-210):

The common is animated and given subjective determination when born of the creative relation between poverty and love. It is for this reason that, in order to nourish the desire of the common, one must be or one must make oneself poor; and if one wishes to construct the common, one must love (Negri 2003:210).

Hardt's concept comes close to *ubuntu*, which stresses interrelationship, and is further from Western concepts of personhood. The meaning behind *ubuntu*¹⁸² is *umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*, which translates to, "each individual's humanity is ideally expressed in relationship with others, and, in turn, individuality is truly expressed" (Battle/Tutu 2009:3-4). *Ubuntu* subjectivity is constructed on distance and relation, particularity and difference. Subjectivity is intersubjective, forming an 'I' through 'otherness'. Eze understands *ubuntu* as a cultural practice located within the social, political, economic and cultural context from which it emerges and not a spiritual, non-material force. Nor is it a solution to any political problem or a substitute for democracy (Eze 2010:181;183).

¹⁸² Mogobe B. Ramose describes *ubuntu* as two words in Bantu languages *ubu* and *ntu*, in which *ubu-* is always oriented toward *-ntu*. *Ubu* means, being; "enfolded be-ing before it manifests itself in the concrete form or mode of existence of a particular entity." *Ubu-* is oriented toward unfoldment, *-ntu*. The two are not separate or opposite, but "mutually founding." *Ubuntu* is "a verbal noun." *Ubu-* is motion - being becoming being - and *-ntu* is a noun (Ramosé 2003:230-231).

Hardt and Negri's "multitude," however, creates social relationships, communication networks, and immaterial labour (Hardt/Negri 2004:336). The multitude is composed of multiple singularities forming a social subject based not on identity, unity or in difference but on what it has in common (Hardt/Negri 2004:99-100). The multitude is a multiplicity of singular differences. It is many and not a single identity, such as 'the people' or 'one'. In the tradition of political philosophy, only such a single identity can be sovereign. Yet, only a single identity can rule. "The entire tradition of political theory seems to agree on one basic principle: only 'the one' can rule, whether that one be conceived as the monarch, the state, the nation, the people, or the party" (Hardt/Negri 2004:328). 'The people' is a duplicitous phrase that "is a form of sovereignty contending to replace the ruling state authority and take power." 'The people' tends to privilege authority rather than the whole population. Hardt and Negri see this ambiguity as a reason for authority and domination to appear in resistance movements (Hardt/Negri 2004:79). "...The challenge posed by the concept of multitude is for a social multiplicity to manage to communicate and act in common while remaining internally different" (Hardt/Negri 2004:xiv). Hardt and Negri envisage a shift from identity to singularity in which multiplicity defines singularity. Singularity is conceived in relation to other singularities and "every singularity points toward a multiplicity within itself" (Hardt/Negri 2009:338-339). For instance, whereas poverty is singularity, love creates multitude within the common:

Common being is generated setting out from a multitude of singular existences, and the eternity of the common is a sky whose stars are

singularities. Love continuously illuminates the stars of this common sky (Negri 2003:211).

Love is social interaction and social production that composes singularities in the common that produce new singularities and new common. “Love should be defined...by the encounters and experimentation of singularities in the common, which in turn produce a new common and new singularities” (Hardt/Negri 2009:184). In the multitude, love produces social life (Hardt/Negri 2009:181). Love forms “a social body that is more powerful than any of our individual bodies alone” (Hardt/Negri 2009:180). Whereas love forms social relationships among multiple singularities for Hardt and Negri, social relationships are always already *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* emphasizes the communal in identity (Battle/Tutu 2009:1). ‘A person is a person through other persons’, and not ‘I think therefore I am’, contends Desmond Tutu, “‘I am human because I belong. I participate, I share’ (Tutu 1999:31).” This is resistant to fragmentation because it presupposes the social relationship.

Hardt and Negri’s constructed subjectivity is prone to fragmentation, as is Nancy’s *Être Singulier Pluriel* (Nancy 1996). While Hardt and Negri’s love composes and multiplies singularities and differences, which produce subjectivity and increase autonomy of participants, Chaplin intersubjectively expresses the communal identity of *ubuntu*. Chaplin shares agency with the audience, characters and objects in the film. Love as agency of the common, whose links are intersubjective does not lead to autonomy and subjectivity. Such agency was possible before the arrival of the talkies in cinema. Gance also experimented with agency in the 1920s. Brownlow, who has worked extensively

on both Chaplin and Gance recognises Gance's innovative use of the camera to involve the audience in the action. In reference to the snowball fight scene at the beginning of *Napoléon* (Gance 1927), Brownlow observes, "Gance wanted to make an actor out of the audience" (Brownlow 1980).¹⁸³ Taking this further than Gance, Chaplin makes a character out of the audience throughout his later silent films such as *The Circus* (1928) and *City Lights* (1931) and in early efforts like *Kid Auto Races Venice* (1914) and *Easy Street* (1917). He does this through a relation with the audience that I have discussed thus far. Chaplin speaks silently not to the audience, but through the audience, making the audience a part of the gag. He explains further that people will laugh at a rich woman having ice cream dropped down her neck because the audience responds in two ways. Firstly, the audience responds to the rich getting "what they deserve" and secondly, because people experience the same emotions as the characters in the scene. Thus, when the rich woman shivered, the audience, knowing that ice cream is cold, shivered too (Chaplin 1918:134). Chaplin explains this type of intersubjectivity:

A thing that puts a person in an embarrassing predicament must always be perfectly familiar to an audience, or else the people will miss the point entirely... If something were used that the audience did not recognize at once, it would not be able to appreciate the point as well (Chaplin 1918:134).

¹⁸³ Editor and film historian, Kevin Brownlow in a 1980 interview, speaking on Gance's *Napoléon*, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJ2kRzJajyo>

I explored Morin's work on intersubjectivity in Chapters One and Two, in which Morin refers to "the fullness of our subjectivity" (Morin 1999:58).¹⁸⁴ In his discussion of the paradox, he states of awareness of human complexity, that our powers of understanding are stronger when seeing a film than in real life (Morin 2006:30-31) (Morin 1999:53). Seeing Chaplin as the Tramp on the cinema screen involves intersubjectivity as openness to others as other subjects that is more difficult to access when seeing an actual tramp in the street (Morin 1999:53) (Morin 1999b:56). Chaplin, for instance, sees the poor as a subject of intersubjective love rather than as an object of charity. For Nancy, love is charity. Love designates relation of one to another in an "infinite relation of the same to the same as originally other than itself" (Nancy 2000:80-81). Hardt argues charity reduces the poor to an object of love (Hardt 2005).

6.6 Hunger

I will now consider how Chaplin exploits the feeling of hunger. Hunger is a robust theme in most of Chaplin's films and emerges as "a rich source" for his comedy (Péron 2003).¹⁸⁵ I will first discuss hunger in a scene from *The Circus* (1928).

In *The Circus*, the Tramp is a hobo that finds employment as a circus clown. The scene opens in the caravan area of the Circus. It is lunchtime and all the

¹⁸⁴ Psychological techniques of projection and identification in films draw on the fullness of our subjectivity, bringing us to understand and sympathize with people who in ordinary circumstances would be foreign or revolting (Morin 1999:58).

¹⁸⁵ *Chaplin Today: The Gold Rush* directed by Serge Le Péron (2003).

performers are eating, except for the circus proprietor's stepdaughter, a circus rider. Her wicked stepfather refuses to let her eat until her performance improves. The next morning, the Tramp sits on some wooden crates and is heating his breakfast in an old tin over a small makeshift stove. He sits outside of the girl's caravan. She opens the door to the caravan and the title, 'Hungry' appears. She spies a slice of bread that the Tramp has set on the crate and scrambles over when he is not looking to grab the bread before anyone catches her. She delights in her spoils, chewing hastily. Next, the Tramp catches her in the act and chases her, shouting and flailing his arms to the point of backing himself into the stove. He falls backwards onto the hot tin, losing his hat and burning his fingers as he regains what is left of his breakfast. Then, he jumps up to recover himself, reprimanding the girl over his shoulder. Chaplin cuts away to the girl looking on most pathetically as the Tramp reassembles his hat, straightens his posture and fixes the lapels on his jacket. He blinks his eyes several times, looking cross, head held high. Then he turns toward her, still cross, and motions for her to come over to sit with him. As she sits, he tears his bread in two and hands her half. She starts eating again with great voracity. The Tramp is appalled by her behaviour and mimics her. Then he adjusts his hat and in a very serious manner, attempts to show the girl the proper dignified way to dine. He turns away for a moment and she has finished her food. He confronts the girl, she hiccups and he scolds her sternly, nodding his head and shaking a finger at her accusingly. He straightens his hat momentarily, and then lets out a huge hiccup, causing him to clutch his chest with one hand, which makes his tie lopsided. The force of the hiccup lifts his hat up and forward a few inches. He rapidly fixes the hat and admonishes the girl. She hiccups, triggering a chain of

hiccupping with the two of them alternating hiccups. Lunch is ruined, as the Tramp hands over his half of the sandwich and staggers around gripping his chest with one hand as he hiccups and holding onto his hat with the other. Each time he hiccups, his hat knocks itself off slightly. The girl offers him the sandwich, but he dismisses her. It finally becomes clear to the Tramp that she lives at the circus and in fact, is the rider from the pony act.

The mean circus proprietor emerges from his caravan and cruelly takes the food from the girl's hand and then hits her in the face. She goes away and the boss turns to shake the Tramp's hand. He and the boss leave together, but the Tramp goes back for his cane. When the boss is out of sight, the Tramp, anchoring his hat with one hand, quickly takes a boiled egg out of the tin and motions up to where the girl is standing at her caravan door. He hands her the egg, tips his hat to her and scurries away, dropping the composed and serious manner from earlier and moving in the Tramp's usual waggish way.

Chaplin in this scene relies upon the audience's understanding of what it is to eat a meal when one is hungry. A hot meal is a rarity for the Tramp, and thus he insists on savouring his food in an unhurried and stately fashion. He makes a point of enjoying the entire dining experience, taking great care in preparing his meal. He sees that the girl is hardly a seasoned pauper. By sharing his meal with her, he feeds the girl. He also shows her how dignified he can be. This display of pride is crucial for him after embarrassing himself when he fell backward onto the fire. He relates to the audience through hunger and dignity. The Tramp's most dignified gesture happens when he hands the girl the egg, thereby setting love into motion. In this scene, Chaplin expresses hunger, exuding a relationship

between poverty and love similar to the creative and subjective relation between love and poverty that Negri and Hardt discuss (Negri 2003:209-210) (Hardt/Negri 2009:179-199). “The poor person is the subject of love... It is the poor person who renders love real” (Negri 2003:209).

The Tramp takes his meals when he can. In *A Dog's Life* (1918), Chaplin is a Tramp who sleeps rough and scavenges for food. In a rare scene with older brother Syd Chaplin, the Tramp steps up to a lunch wagon owned by the elder Chaplin. Whenever Syd has his back turned to the counter, the Tramp helps himself to a small snack from a plate of about a dozen little pies. The proprietor is so gullible, that he lets the Tramp nearly finish all of the pies and winds up clobbering a policeman accidentally with salami. The Tramp escapes, leaving only one pie left on the plate. A key aspect of this gag is an awareness and understanding of hunger on the part of the audience, instigated by Chaplin's attentiveness, love and resonance. He listens, referring back meaning, as I have discussed in the previous chapters and as I have discussed in the current chapter, he constructs and nourishes the common. He does this through an interrelationship among himself, the film and the audience, which is a “creative relation between poverty and love,” thereby establishing intersubjectivity (Negri 2003:210).

In an earlier scene, he rescues a puppy and feeds the puppy from a milk bottle he finds sitting mostly empty on a doorstep. In this way, *A Dog's Life* foreshadows *The Kid* (1921), in which the Tramp adopts and provides for a stray child. In both films, love by way of hunger creates a common relation with the Tramp, the audience and the film. What they both show is how love constructs the common

and “makes a subject of it” (Negri 2003:209). Hardt and Negri’s “multitude is a set of singularities that poverty and love compose in the reproduction of the common...” (Hardt/Negri 2009:xii-xiii). The common is what comes out of social production – in this case, love. He does not form an identity of hunger with the audience that would make them the same. Chaplin and audience are differences created by love, poverty, hunger, and they construct the common.

In *Modern Times* (1936), hunger is a constant challenge to be overcome for most of the characters in the film. When the Tramp orders an extravagant tray of food in a café that he cannot pay for, this has a dual purpose of providing him a free meal and for getting himself sent back to prison. Life in prison is easier than life on the street because he knows he will be fed on a regular basis. The Gamin steals bananas to feed her family; the Tramp is prodded and basted by the feeding machine; he feeds the foreman in the factory through a funnel; his co-worker sits on a bowl of soup; the Tramp fights over a loaf of bread in the prison; and the Tramp and the Gamin share a meal in their fantasy dream house, in their derelict shack and at the empty department store lunch counter. For the Tramp and the Gamin, the relation between love and poverty expressed by hunger constructs the common, as it does for Negri (Negri 2003:208-210). Chaplin constructs the common by relating to the audience through hunger and dignity and not through privileging of identity.

6.6 Placing Resonance

Viewed according to Hardt and Negri’s analysis, the relation between the Tramp, the audience and the film produces subjectivity in the common, Nancy considers that “the subject who is listening...is perhaps no subject at all, except as the place

of resonance” (Nancy 2007:21-22). Nancy here thinks better than to attempt to overturn the subject. The subject is instead the listening place where vibrations refer back meaning and resound. Nancy does not make listening into a subject-position because he does not want to re-ground a self-positing subject. Nancy places resonance where his earlier work discussed the subject as a self-positing image of itself. He turns to resonance in order to avoid creating a subject detached from an object or a subject present to itself. By referring back waves of meaning to itself as other, the place of resonance or sonorous body makes itself listened to by listening to itself. I believe whether this other is another subject or an object, Nancy has, in this sonorous presence, both a subject that is not self-present and an object at the same time.

Chaplin does not refer to the audience as himself. He refers back to himself as other, while the audience as another player in the film is other, but also is not an object. This means that Chaplin and audience are not identical, nor is the audience a fixed other. Instead, the other moves in resonance. The ear of the other is a place of resonance. It resounds as it signs.

The ear of the other is imperative for Echo and Narcissus to be able to speak to each other. Though Echo and Narcissus are two subject-positions, this is not enough to sign their love. Echo becomes a subject-position, but her brief victory ends when she cannot make herself listened to. For Spivak, Echo turns around a privileging of identity until Juno augments the curse on Echo. In her final state, Echo has no ear, no place of resonance. She is a hard surface, reflecting the self-presentation of meaning of the speaker that is never her self. No one hears her speak. She cannot even hear herself speak.

Echo resounded as a sonorous presence before she became subaltern. The Tramp, though not subaltern, is a sonorous presence. Chaplin's agency and voice are accessible to himself, the characters and the audience. Chaplin is the ear of the other. This means he has an ear for the audience's attention, what Jeremy Prynne refers to as, "the mental ears of the poet" (Prynne).¹⁸⁶ Chaplin, with "mental ears," makes himself indissociable with the audience, while at the same time he is the Tramp. By Chaplin's direct engagement with the audience he attends to and answers the demand of the other. The audience is other, but not an object. Like 'I and I' that explicitly does not refer to an object, Chaplin's engagement with the audience does not separate himself and the audience as subject and object. By not separating his self and the audience as subject and object, their dialogue has no implicit object. In this chapter, I have discussed Okolo's description of the self as a subject that relates to others, not solely as object. While a Cartesian *cogito* is a subject detached from an object, in the African philosophy and culture of *ubuntu*, both subject and object occupy individual existence (Okolo 2003:213-214). I propose the subject is always already a relation to others and a thing can be both an object and not an object at the same time.

6.7 Intellectuals and Spivak

For Spivak, the intellectual only reflects and repeats himself in the subaltern. In order for the subaltern to speak, Spivak wants intellectuals to access the other as

¹⁸⁶ A lecture by J.H. Prynne as part of the Poem Present series at The University of Chicago. Copyright 2009, The University of Chicago.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjM8SruqTdo>

subject and not solely as object (Spivak 1994:78;80). Nancy or Hallward might read this as a return to a philosophy of the subject.

In Listening (Nancy 2007), Nancy circumvents any return to a philosophy of the subject. Nancy is not initiating a subject; the subject persists as a place of resonance that turns back and constructs the common. Listening (Nancy 2007) is more a response to Derrida's critique of Nancy's theory of touch that I discussed in Chapter Four than a critique of the Cartesian subject. In Chapter Four, I explored *palintropos* in Derrida's critique of Nancy's figure of touch and considered how touching and resonance are related. Derrida maintains a non-presence that is at the same time immediate and interrupting. Nancy's theory of resonance in which resonance is non-presence that is also immediacy improves on Derrida's critique of Nancy's thesis on touching as haptocentrism. I propose that Nancy, in Listening (2007) and originally in his 2002 work, À l'écoute responds to this criticism from Derrida. Nancean resonance is a turning back (*rebroussement*) or referring back (*renvoi*), of a subject to itself as other, where resonance is non-presence and also immediacy. Derrida asks if Nancean touching implies unity, immediacy and continuity between touching and the touched, despite Nancy's claim to think of touch as fragmented and discontinuous. In short, Nancy turns around Derrida's critique of touching by questioning Derrida on listening. For Nancy, a place of resonance is where a subject is listening and turning back. This movement of referring back to the self as another subject is the space of a self, and not presence to self. In my reading of Nancy, Nancean resonance is a subject and an object not at the same time, but in the same place of resonance (Nancy 2007:8;12).

According to Hallward, Spivak singularizes the subaltern as “untouchable” and beyond relation. He argues Spivak, in constructing the subaltern as singularity, wants to preserve a form of agency that coincides with “a singular orientation” that governs her body of work (Hallward 2001:27;33). She is not working to strengthen a specific identity or voice. For Hallward, the subaltern is a “non-relational *difference*” or an ‘impossible ethical singularity’ (Hallward 2001:30-33) (Morton 2007:65-66). Morton holds that Hallward, in his critique of Spivak, overlooks the exclusion from any means to social mobility for Spivak’s subaltern (Morton 2007:66). The subaltern for Spivak does not need to be given voice because the subaltern has no access to any of society’s infrastructure or to social mobility (Spivak, et al. 2006:70-72). I believe the part of Echo that was lost when her body turned to stone is the part of the subaltern’s body that is shut down. This is the place where Echo resounded and referred back meaning by turning back. It is this place of resonance, where she listened (*l’écoute*) (Nancy 2007:22).

Abena Busia, in a response to “Can the Subaltern Speak?” (Spivak 1988), argues Spivak’s reading of Bhubaneswari’s self-destruction is indeed speaking. Spivak agrees on the grounds “all speaking, even seemingly the most immediate, entails a distanced decipherment by another, which is, at best, an interception. That is what speaking is” (Spivak 1999:309). Yet, she adds, “the moot decipherment by another in an academic institution...many years later must not be too quickly identified with the ‘speaking’ of the subaltern” (Spivak 1999:309). Spivak also acknowledges the necessity of her own complicity in silencing or “muting” the subaltern. As Tina Chanter points out, “Spivak is willing to extend her suspicion of the purity of intentions to herself...” (Chanter 2006:106).

Spivak attempts to address the singularity charge with a new idiom, as Morton suggests, that would allow the subaltern to speak and be heard (Morton 2007:91;122-123;173). I believe that Spivak wants a new idiom for the subaltern. This new idiom is listening (*s'écouter*) and what Busia's response describes is *l'entente*. I see Spivak's question, "Can the subaltern speak" (Spivak 1994:66) as more a question of listening than a question of speaking or of completing a speech act. Though the subaltern cannot make herself heard (*se faire entendre*), she can make her listening listened to (*écouter*).

6.8 Conclusion: Constructing the Common

Could Spivak's subaltern listen if she had a place of resonance to refer back to herself as other? I do not propound a theory of listening as an alternative solution to Bhubaneswari's "effort to the death to speak" (Spivak 1996:292). Spivak explains what her intention was in "Can the Subaltern Speak?":

The point that I was trying to make was that if there was no valid institutional background for resistance, it could not be recognized. Bhubaneswari's resistance against the axioms that animated sati could not be recognized. She could not speak.

In "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Spivak does not make the point that *satis* cannot speak. When someone tries to speak, she argues, it is not and cannot be attended to or acknowledged. I rather question if the subaltern can represent the other as she attempts to represent herself, forging a common identity and thereby undermining a privilege of identity. In this scenario, *s'écouter* can be possible in the subaltern failed by *l'entente* because by turning back and making herself listened to, the subaltern does not speak; she resounds. In this way, she can be

subject and object. It is not Echo's sovereign speech act that undermines the curse. She signs her own love as she signs of the ear of the other. She resounds, referring back the call of the other to herself and turning around the privileging of identity that is her curse. At first, Echo manages to sign her love. By the end of the fable, however, Echo fails to make herself listened to. Only the reflection of the other can be heard. She cannot be heard by anyone, nor does she have any place of resonance to listen or be listened to.

I have discussed how the social relationships formed by Hardt and Negri's multitude are not based on identity, but on the common. Love, for Hardt and Negri constructs the common by preserving differences and fostering interaction among singularities. Hardt and Negri define love as a process that produces the common and constructs subjectivity. Negri holds that love is the common and it is a demand of poverty. Poverty constitutes the common. Through examples from the films *The Circus*, *A Dog's Life* and *Modern Times*, I have shown how Chaplin conveys the relation between love and poverty, thereby forming the common. He expresses the common through the Tramp's recurring motif of hunger. He communicates this through the audience's relation with the Tramp's making great effort to maintain dignity in approaching the theme of hunger.

Chaplin speaks silently not to the audience, but through an interrelationship with the audience, making the audience a part of the gag. For instance, with hunger, Chaplin relies upon the audience's understanding of what it is to eat a meal when one is hungry. Chaplin constructs the common by relating to the audience through hunger and dignity and not through privileging of identity among sameness, but a shared, common identity. Chaplin does not separate himself and

the audience as subject and object. Chaplin is neither other, nor is he the same as the audience. He refers back to himself as other, but not as an object. In this scenario, the subject is always already a relation to others. The Tramp is a speech-free character that is never silent and is always already listening (Nancy 2007:8-16). Since Chaplin is neither identical nor other to the audience, I conclude the other resounds. In this way, he makes himself listened to by listening to himself. A Nancean place of resonance, as I discussed in Chapter Three, is both a subject that is not self-present and an object at the same time. A place of resonance is a subject in that it listens to itself (*s'écouter*). It is not, however, a subject detached from an object. It refers back waves of meaning to itself as other in order to make its self listened to and to listen to itself as other. This place of resonance is not therefore, a subject that is present to its self.

I see listening and resonance as a way toward an *ubuntu* culture or communality that is always already relational. In *ubuntu*, derived from “the Bantu notion of referring to the human person” (Eze 2010:184), which I discussed in Chapters Four and Five, the subject is in relation to others. *Ubuntu* depends on the otherness of the other, so that an ‘I’ is formed through ‘otherness’. In *ubuntu*, “...we are because you are, and since you are, definitely I am” (Eze 2010:191). The ‘I am’, M. O. Eze argues, “is not a rigid subject.” *Ubuntu* is a common identity based on relation that does not separate or privilege identity. I discussed love according to Hardt and Negri as an agency of the common. Chaplin shares agency with the audience and the film. This shared agency is connected with the community and social relationships in *ubuntu* culture. In this way, social relationships are always already *ubuntu* and, like Chaplin, interrelated and always connected. Chaplin, as he represents the other while he represents

himself, offers us a notion of what a culture of *ubuntu* might be like.

Echo, however, does not represent the other as she represents herself. She does not have a subject-position, voice or agency. Rather than speak, she reflects the voice of the elite. *L'entente* fails Echo as it fails the subaltern. She cannot become a subject or sign her own love. Like the subaltern, Echo does not have the ability to speak. This is because she is not heard and thus, not recognised. By way of *s'écouter*, however, the subaltern could resound. With *s'écouter*, the subaltern could represent the other as she represents herself, thereby turning around a privileging of identity. This creates a common identity. In this way, *s'écouter* could give the subaltern the possibility of speaking. As Chaplin, through *s'écouter*, becomes a subject, he speaks as both himself and as his audience. He combines vibrations with his own and resounds. If the subaltern could do the same, she would make herself listened to.

Conclusion: A Voice That Keeps Silent Makes Itself Listened To

In this thesis I have argued that philosophy is capable of meeting the demand of listening as both *l'entente* and *l'écoute*. In considering the overarching question posed by Nancy, "Is listening something of which philosophy is capable?" (Nancy 2007:1), I have argued Nancy's philosophy is capable of the active mediation of listening. In his inquiry as to whether philosophy is capable of *l'écoute* or only *l'entente*, Nancy could deconstruct the undervalued position of *l'écoute*, thus proving the premise of listening's essentiality to speech. Rather than creating a reversal of speech and listening or hearing and listening, I have taken Nancy's inquiry as a questioning of the deconstruction of logocentric thinking. Nancean listening does not presuppose a self and 'you' in opposition nor does it require a self divided as subject and object. I argued that Nancy's listening entails a self and a you that are linked in a movement of resonance. Nancean resonance involves a referring back of meaning to a self as other and not as another subject or object. As Nancy confronts a question of listening, he reveals philosophy's ability to meet the demand of listening as both *l'entente* and *l'écoute*. I showed in this thesis that Chaplin listens as *l'entente* and *l'écoute* as well. Taking Nancy's question further, I have argued that philosophy can listen as Chaplin listens.

The main point of this argument was that *l'écoute* is an attention and not hearing and understanding. This includes the point that *l'écoute* is a motion toward a tension that re-sounds. The attention of *s'écouter* is an attending to the self as other. For Nancy, *s'écouter* involves resonance. In a Nancean theory of resonance, a subject turns meaning back on its self and refers back to itself as other. For Nancy, a place of resonance is where the one listening refers back to

itself as other. Listening is a relationship in self and to itself, but without self-presence. Nancy dubs this state a “sonorous present” (Nancy 2007:12-13). *S’écouter* is different from *s’entendre-parler* or hearing oneself speak as one is speaking. *S’écouter* has nothing to do with speaking immediate speech. Meaning is self-understanding in proximity to a self in *s’entendre-parler*. Derrida explains *s’entendre-parler* is self-presence of meaning by hearing or understanding oneself speak in immediate self-presence. Speaker and listener are in absolute proximity with each other, in which one hears oneself speaking at the same time that one speaks. *S’entendre-parler* is a self’s attention to itself. This unity makes self-present meaning, the basis for Derrida’s discussion of logocentric thinking, as the idea that *logos* is always attributed to the origin of truth.

In *s’écouter*, however, a subject attends to the self as other. *S’écouter* is not in opposition to the logocentric thinking of *s’entendre-parler*. The point of complicating listening into *l’entente* and *l’écoute* is to show how a deconstruction of logocentrism presupposes speaking, thus privileging speech. Deconstruction questions the privileging of identity. In the deconstruction of logocentrism, the bias of a privileging of speech, the presence of speaker and listener to each other in time and space represents nothing. It turns around the notion that *logos* is a central presence. This critique reveals the origin of truth is not *logos*, as it is always assigned.

These arguments relied on readings of Chaplin’s films that feature the non-talking Tramp character. Through discussions of Chaplin’s silent films, I illustrated how Chaplin differs from other performers in that he has a connection with his audience and with himself as other that is based on *s’écouter*. In these

readings, I have examined how Chaplin listens through Nancean resonance and attention to others. I claimed that Chaplin listens to himself (*il s'écoute*) as other. He is a place of resonance and he makes his listening listened to through silent dialogue with himself by way of himself as other.

I referred to Chaplin's *s'écouter* when he listens to himself as other and makes his listening listened to. He can be understood (*s'entendre*) and listened to (*s'écouter*) without actually having spoken. Chaplin, by way of the other, listens to himself through a movement of resonance with himself as other. This movement is *s'écouter* in that he listens to himself resounding. In this way, he makes himself understood (*se fait entendre*) as he makes himself listened to (*se fait écouter*).

Through *s'écouter*, Chaplin builds his gags on "a striving for dignity" (Geduld 1987:16) via the maintaining and regaining of the Tramp's dignity. He confides this dignity directly in the audience in order to make his listening listened to. He humanises the Tramp through, for example, his ill-fitting costume. Chaplin created many of his gags around this striving for dignity despite the Tramp's undignified situation. By confiding in the audience and making his listening listened to, his self refers to itself as other. Chaplin exploits this relation in order to make people laugh.

Chaplin's listening is Nancean resonance, the movement in which a subject refers back to itself as another subject, in constant motion of spatial and temporal non-presence. Moving in resonance, Chaplin makes the subject as other as he refers back to himself as other. As a place of resonance, Chaplin moves toward a tension and toward a subject. Chaplin's resonance is his turning and referring

back to his self as other. Difference is created by the other and Chaplin's self as other that he listens to. By maintaining temporal and spatial difference, he manages to avoid immediate self-presence. Chaplin does not listen in terms of hearing himself speak, *s'entendre-parler* or auto-affection. His listening to himself is not in absolute proximity to self or other. I showed how Chaplin's difference between self and other is key to understanding how in this movement of *s'écouter*, Chaplin's self does not become a centre. He is not an auto-affection moving from a subject to its self. That would be immediate self-presence and not resonance.

The discussion on Chaplin's work in which Chaplin communicates by *s'écouter* and makes people laugh by making himself understood (*se fait entendre*) as he makes himself listened to (*se fait écouter*) was important in that it allowed me to show that *l'écoute* and *l'entente* express relation. This relation is diunital because in the movement of resonance *l'écoute* and *l'entente* are separate and together at the same time. Chaplin's listening is Nancean listening in that it does not defer the subject as non-subject. He refers to himself as other and in referring to his self as other he is relation. In Being Singular Plural (Nancy 2000), there is relation among singularities. Even non-relation is relational in Being Singular Plural. Chaplin's relation through *s'écouter* entails listening to himself as other, but he also listens to himself as audience. In this way, Chaplin cannot be a non-relation.

Chaplin as a subject refers back to himself as another subject and not as another self or a split self. Chaplin's relation is with the audience as the other that he resounds as. This relation is a result of his referring back to his self as other and

making himself indissociable with the audience. He and audience are not separated as subject and object. In this way, Chaplin is in a diunital relation with the audience. They are connected while at the same time not connected. Chaplin's audience is other, but not an object. This forms a relation among audience, Chaplin and his self as other. The self as other is a relation in itself.

The discussion of Chaplin's work allowed my critical claims to emerge. Nancean resonance interrupts self-presence through changing and turning constantly among *logos*, listener and speaker. The interruptive difference breaks with immediacy in the spacing of resonance and in the flow of rhythm. I argued this combination is diunital because it has immediacy and a break with immediacy at the same time.

I have explained the immediacy and break with immediacy in Derrida's phrase *se toucher toi*. *Se toucher toi*, meaning, 'self-touching-you' or 'to self-touch you' is contact with the self and with the other. It is a relation between a self and a you in which the two are indissociable and at the same time, not two sides of a same self. There is dissymmetry in both *se toucher toi* and in 'I and I'. With 'I and I', self and non-self are not separated. In this way, I and I are not a subject and an object and they are not objects. As I argued in Chapter Four, in *se toucher toi* as well as 'I and I', the self and the 'you' are linked as 'subjects'.

I connected the dissymmetry in *se toucher toi* and 'I and I' to *ubuntu* and to antiphony. Antiphony, a movement between a call and a response, I argued is active in Chaplin's resonance. I showed how Chaplin's call brings a response from the audience. His connection with the audience creates a gag, calling attention to class differences and not transcending them. Chaplin, in his

connection with himself as other and with the audience as other, forms a relation similar to *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* philosophy is a worldview originating in Bantu languages, in which humans are interconnected through community. Self is formed interdependently and individually at the same time. “A person depends on other persons to be a person” (Battle/Tutu 2009:3). This is how individuality is expressed in *ubuntu*. In this way, a relationship with others is what expresses the humanity of every individual. In *ubuntu*, the relation is diunital. *Ubuntu* is an individual and a universal relation at the same time. In this way, people are individual and interdependent. Chaplin, other and audience share a similar interconnection.

These claims led me to address challenges coming from Derrida and from Hallward, which claim Nancy’s theory of relation is founded on non-relation. Hallward asserts Nancy’s work is based on singular principles, which he identifies with modern French philosophy. In Listening (2007), I argued, Nancy answers both Derrida’s and Hallward’s critiques around the notion of the non-relation of his philosophy. *S’écouter* ruins Derrida’s argument in Speech and Phenomena. Nancean resonance as discussed in Listening counters Hallward’s critique and, as I pointed out in Chapter Four, it turns around Derrida’s discussion of Nancy’s theory of touching as haptocentrism. In this way, I showed how Nancy in Listening questions Derrida’s emphasis on *s’entendre-parler* and neglect of *l’écoute* in his critique of the privileging of speech.

The first problem I addressed was the belief that verbal output is proportionate to a deficiency of listening because a logocentric tradition privileges speech. More modes of communication, however, do not make listening more imperative. I

concluded there is not a direct correlation between increased speech and a need for listening. To confront this, I focussed on Nancy's complication of the problem of listening; asking what kind of listening philosophy is capable of. The problem is in the notion of reaching for *logos* as a centre. This *logos*, I believe, is shifting and not steady or catchable. Logocentrism is a desire for something diunital and not a fixed, constant presence. Whereas higher value may be given to spoken word, Western philosophy is not founded on a culture "incapable of paying heed," as Fiumara argues (Fiumara 1990:8). Philosophy involves relation, *logos* and listening.

This led to my discussion of the problem that if Chaplin had made a talkie with the Tramp, he could not have listened to himself as other (*s'écouter*). The immediacy of the talkies' marriage of sound and picture would have obstructed the break with immediacy Chaplin relied on to make his Tramp character work. Derrida contends the voice is repeated when speaking is done. As speaking repeats voice, the talkies repeat speech. This is why the talkies, in extending voice and speech, made cinema into an auto-affection. Chaplin refused to make his character speak because he believed speech would change the way in which his work would be listened to.

As rhythm is constitutive of speech, I have argued rhythm speaks. *Entendre*, to understand or hear speech, requires rhythm in order to understand and hear meaning. What makes rhythm spoken or written is *l'écoute*. Resounding, *l'écoute* turns meaning back to itself as other in immediacy and not self-presence. This back-turning creates rhythm in *logos*, which can be spoken or written. *L'écoute* then precedes writing. Rhythm, through listening (*l'écoute*)

precedes and makes possible writing too. I have shown the opposition between speech and listening to be an illusion. For Derrida, writing is a spacing, setting *logos* aside from itself. He believes that writing spaces. It has spatial and temporal difference, which makes writing less immediate than speech. Writing is more originary than speech, thus writing precedes and makes possible speech. Rhythm, however, as I have argued, makes speech written in memory. A Nancean theory of listening allows me to show in the end, that listening (*l'écoute*) precedes speech and writing, talkies and silents, rhythm and memory and *l'entente*. This implies that listening is more originary than speech or writing, thus questioning a notion of traditional Western philosophy that privileges speech and word.

Listening, in a movement of resonance, completes deconstruction's pushing away. In Chapter Six, I discussed how Nancean notions of resonance and listening traverse Spivak's discussions of deconstruction. The turning back that Spivak compares with a movement of deconstruction and the pushing away of meaning that deconstruction turns around are as *palintropic* as the movement of Nancean resonance (Spivak 1999:423). In this way, deconstruction listens, turning, and not reversing, intensified waves of meaning back to itself. This is not simply a shift in thinking from a centre to the margins. As resonance turns back again, deconstruction of logocentrism turns back on a constantly shifting foundation.

I have described a tendency to attempt to hold on to a central presence. The problem of listening, as I have said in Chapter Five, is the desire to catch hold of *logos*. The problem of *logos* or logocentric thinking is a longing for a centre.

What is interesting about logocentrism is not that Western thought is wrong in desiring a centre. Deconstruction, as Spivak puts it, critiques “what one cannot not want” (Spivak 1996:28). Following this, one cannot not want *logos*. In this thesis, I have reconsidered the meaning of *logos*. *Logos*, I argued, could be something relational in speech or language and not the word as such. I discussed a relation between rhythm and listening in making meaning.

This led to my reading of Chaplin’s films in which he used the Tramp character. It was only possible for Chaplin to do this with the Tramp in his silent films before he started making talkies. The character never appeared in a talking film. The Tramp’s big singing scene at the end of *Modern Times* illustrates how rhythm speaks when words cannot. His inability to recover his cuff with the song lyrics written on it demonstrates that synchronised intelligible dialogue does not tell a story as audience listening does. Synchronised sound is an immediacy based on separation and non-relation. This gives the effect of *s’entendre-parler* by separating word and image, then marrying them together in immediate self-presence. In the talkies, spoken dialogue and picture are present simultaneously. They are synchronized and then projected together at the same rate. Through rhythm, however, Chaplin employs rhyme, body movements, expressions and gestures to make people laugh. When the words to the song become unavailable, the Tramp uses the rhythm of the music to carry the meaning of the song. Therein lies the gag. This was an opportunity Chaplin created to make the Tramp’s voice heard. Yet, the song descended into gibberish, which was a funnier gag than any words he could sing would have produced.

Chaplin did manage to make nontalking films in the midst of the talkies revolution in Hollywood. Chaplin rejected the talkies in 1931 because of their limitation to one language and exclusion of audiences that did not speak the same language. He felt that action could be understood by more people than dialogue could. As Chaplin put it, "...there is a constant demand for a medium that is universal in its utility" (Chaplin 1931b:63). "The lift of an eyebrow, however faint, may convey more than a hundred words" (Chaplin 1931b:64). For this reason, he was confident that "nontalking productions" would be revived in the future (Chaplin 1931b:63). In accord with Chaplin, Winston Churchill, in an essay entitled, "Everybody's Language" (Churchill 1935:74-78), predicted a resurgence of nontalking films. Citing thousands of cinemas in the world that in 1935 had not yet been wired for sound, Churchill saw an open market for nontalking films. "There are millions of people whose mother tongue will never be heard in any cinema and who understand thoroughly no other speech." "...A new film public will be created - a public which can be served most effectively by means of pantomime" (Churchill 1935:77).

The Tramp appeared in no further films after *Modern Times*. Chaplin refused to make a talking film with the Tramp character because a talking Tramp would have severed his connection with the audience. What makes Chaplin unique as an actor is his direct access to self and other at the same time. Chaplin uses audience listening to make himself listened to. The original title of Nancy's Listening (2007), *À l'écoute* (Nancy 2002), evokes 'to be listening to' or *être à l'écoute de*. Philosophy, as I have argued, as *l'écoute* and *l'entente*, is always ready to listen.

There has been a recent wave of modern nontalking films, which could provide a new area of research related to listening. Sylvain Chomet's animation films have been inspired by Chaplin and by the silent comedy work of 1960s filmmaker and actor Jacques Tati. Chomet's films include, *The Illusionist* (Chomet 2010), *La Vieille Dame et Les Pigeons* (Chomet 1998) and *Les Triplettes de Belleville* (Chomet 2003).¹⁸⁷ *The Artist* (Hazanavicius 2011) illustrates how the transition to the talkies was not an obsession with speech, with technology or with sound, but an obsession with language. The talkies, Paul Virilio states, are a "ventriloquists's art" (Lotringer/Virilio 2005:39), complaining that the screen leaves no space for the audience to say anything or to interact (Lotringer/Virilio 2005:39). Virilio's critique of the talkies could lead to further research into the perils of sync sound during the period 1927 to 1929.

As I discussed in Chapter Five of this thesis, the first and last time the Tramp's voice was heard was in one scene at the end of *Modern Times*. Following *Modern Times*, Chaplin made *The Great Dictator*. Just as *City Lights* and *Modern Times* made use of nonsense or garbled speech, *The Great Dictator*, Chaplin's first talkie also used gibberish. This could be taken into consideration with Mladen Dolar's work on the voice and totalitarianism to further explore the tyranny of the talkies (Dolar 2006:202). A connection can also be made with Žižek's work, which links speech with violence and questions if the human capacity for violence mirrors the human ability to speak (Žižek 2008:52;187).

¹⁸⁷ Also known as, *Belleville Rendez-Vous* (Chomet 2003)

Although I do not aim to solve the problem of an origin of philosophy here in this thesis, reading pre-Socratic works with this in mind and re-interpreting how African philosophies might have influenced these Greek authors, I give an alternative philosophical perspective on early Greek philosophy. Further research could explore the common communication shared among philosophers around the 5th century BC in Greece and Egypt as a diunital relation that was Egyptian and Greek at the same time. Thinking this way about pre-Socratic philosophy can add to our understanding of European philosophy by considering a broader picture in terms of how ancient Greek philosophy was influenced and inspired by Egyptian thinkers.

Finally, this research is moving toward an engagement with Nancy's work specifically in relation with Derrida. Nancy scholars Adrienne Janus (2011), Lisa Coulthard (2012) and Ian James (2012:47-49) have recently published work on Nancean listening. An investigation into Derrida's discussion of Nancy and Nancy's work that addresses this critique would continue in the same vein as the discussion on *Le Toucher, Jean-Luc Nancy* (Derrida 2000) in respect to Nancy's *À l'écoute* (Nancy 2002) that I have begun in this thesis.

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